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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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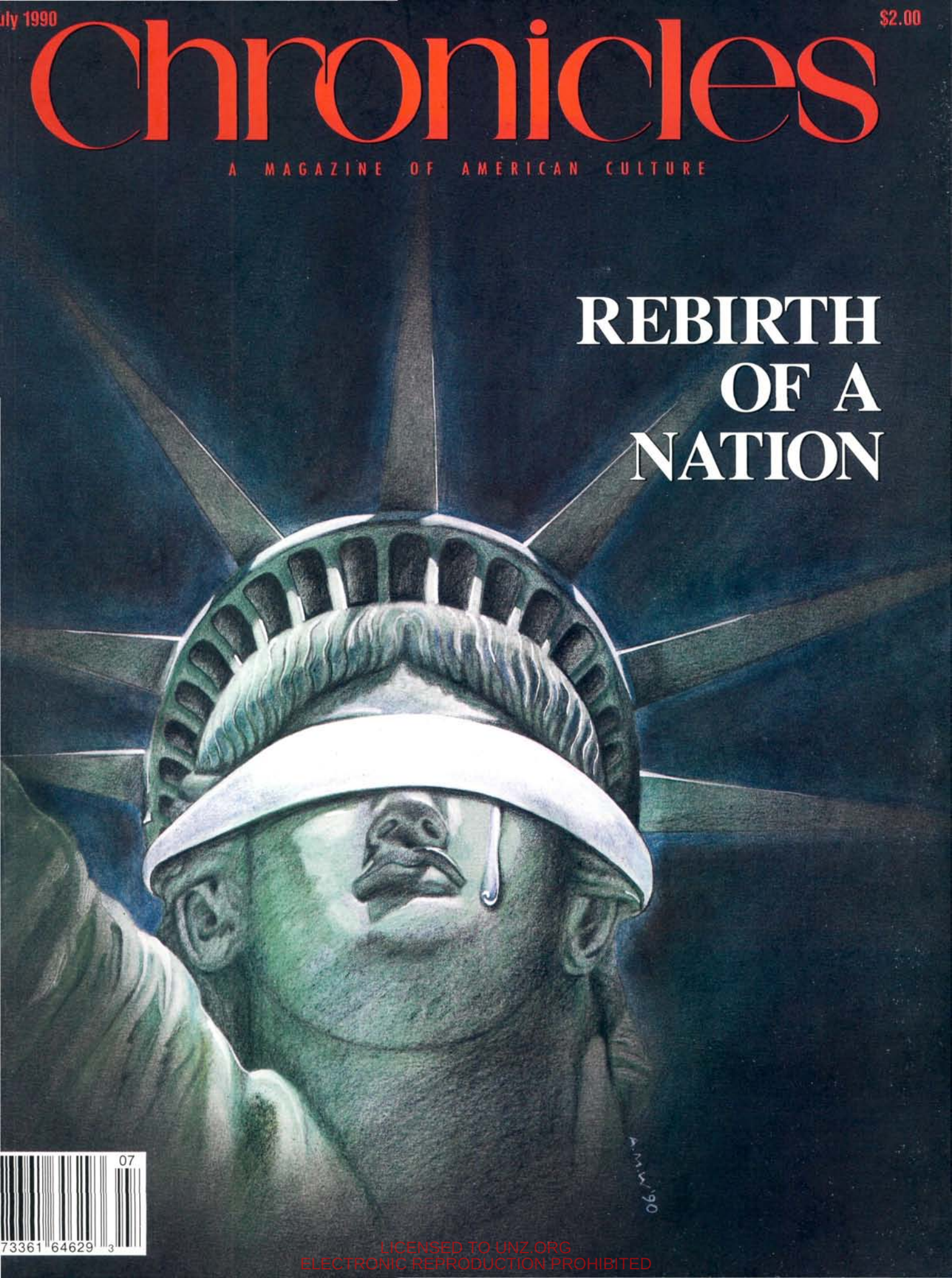

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"One town, one country, is very like another. Civilized nations have the same customs, and barbarous nations have the same nature."
—Samuel Johnson

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On 'The Agony of Gorbachev'

Hugh Ragsdale's February article charges Gorbachev with blindness to Russia's experience with reform, but by citing the anti-alcohol program as a fundamental proof of Gorbachev's myopia, Ragsdale comes close to removing his essay from further serious consideration. He finally settles down when he begins to analyze some of the contradictions in Soviet society and to point out that "democracy" may mean something different to Russians than to you and me. Professor Ragsdale is quite right in suggesting that true *perestroika* would be painful for most of Soviet society and that many will oppose it.

What he does not raise are the institutional problems in breaking down the centralized controls of Soviet economic planning and management, the disruption to economic infrastructures if any Soviet republic should effectively secede, and the even greater lessons Soviet citizens would have to learn with the advent of political pluralism than those confronting their Western neighbors. Seeing the true complexities of the situation only highlights the realities which must be faced.

Although Ragsdale does come around to give President Gorbachev his due before he is finished, it is he, Ragsdale, who begins to appear misguided, ahistorical, and naive when he pins his hopes on the Russian Orthodox Church and Soviet women. Russian Orthodox piety has much to be admired, but the history of the institutional church reveals little potential for civic renaissance, especially in modern times. It has been at the heart of that Russian culture so antagonistic to Gorbachev's efforts as cited by Ragsdale earlier in his essay. Russian women may have served as the keel that prevented Russian society from capsizing during its many times of troubles. Yet, whatever their destiny, it is unlikely that they will become the Soviet Union's rudder, let alone take the helm, in time to avoid the shoals that lie so close at hand.

It is very difficult to pinpoint Professor Ragsdale's vision for Soviet Russia's future. His concluding reference to Solzhenitsyn makes one suspect that in the end he is a man of faith, but is his faith in the very cultural heritage he has decried?

—*G. Douglas Nicoll*
Professor of History
Beloit College
Beloit, WI

On 'Contempt for Congress'

Clyde Wilson's tribute to greed in Congress (Cultural Revolutions, February 1990) was a sad truth. He was right when he noted that Congress is not the only greedy party. The electorate is, too. Of course, the electorate is more stupid because they are doing it to themselves! What Congress gives away it must first take away.

The situation should not come as a surprise. Back in 1835 Alexis de Tocqueville wrote that the United States, because of its natural resources and form of government, would become the greatest power on Earth and would continue to grow until its citizens found out they could vote themselves money. After that, he was not too optimistic of the outcome.

Two solutions come to mind. First, a limit on the number of terms for a Congressman. Second, acceptance of unearned government benefits (from food stamps to farm subsidies and everything in between) should, because of the obvious conflict of interest, signify the recipient's renunciation of the privilege of voting in any election.

I doubt if either solution will come to pass. After all, Congress must vote on it.

—*George Savage*
Aledo, TX

Thorstein Veblen's The Instinct of Workmanship *was mistakingly printed as* The Insistence of Workmanship *in our May 1990 issue. We wish also to add that* The Voice of Liberal Learning: Michael Oakeshott on Education, *reviewed in our March issue, was edited by Timothy Fuller. The editors regret the error and omission.*

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50,000 HAITIAN immigrants gathered in the streets of New York the other month, angry at an FDA hint that they consider not giving blood. With the appalling AIDS rate among Haitians, and the ease with which some infected blood can pass the screening tests, it seemed an unobjectionable idea. But not in Manhattan, 1990.

You may think there's no right to poison the American blood supply, but you'd be wrong. State-licensed victims have special rights, and for violating them, the FDA has done penance.

At the Haitian hate-o-rama, one speaker said that since AIDS was a white plot to wipe out blacks, Haitians should "turn it back on white folks," presumably by further polluting the blood supply. Since Haitians take great pride in a revolution whose central act was the massacre of all the white men, women, and children in the country, perhaps the speaker was simply upholding his national tradition.

Such things make it difficult to be a libertarian on immigration these days —until one realizes that many natives behave even worse, and that Haitians aren't typical. There are also the north Asians, whose decent communities, strong families, rooted culture, and economic triumph seem to vindicate the open borders that were the American tradition until 1921. Of course, most other immigrants fall somewhere between these two extremes.

A free market means free movement of goods, capital, and people. From an economic point of view, the borders of the U.S. ought to have no more significance than those of Illinois. But economics doesn't tell us everything.

In the 19th century, our unregulated and therefore booming economy easily absorbed everyone who wanted to work. There was no welfare state, no ideology of victimhood, and no inferiority complex about our values. Far from being ashamed of "centuries of white, Western oppression," our fathers knew that the Republic represented something uniquely good in history. It was, after all, why immigrants flocked here, and willingly conformed to the norms of a self-confident culture.

Everyone became an American; everyone *wanted* to become an American. This didn't, as it should not have, prevent German immigrants (for example) from wanting to preserve their language and culture in parochial schools, but there was no nonsense about bilingual public education to prevent assimilation. Nor were voodoo cultures exalted at taxpayer expense over the West. And it would never have crossed anyone's mind that English wasn't the official language of the United States.

Progressivism perverted all this, of course. And now we have immigrants who use the welfare system, and the politics of ethnic victimology, to gain privileges at the expense of the rest of us.

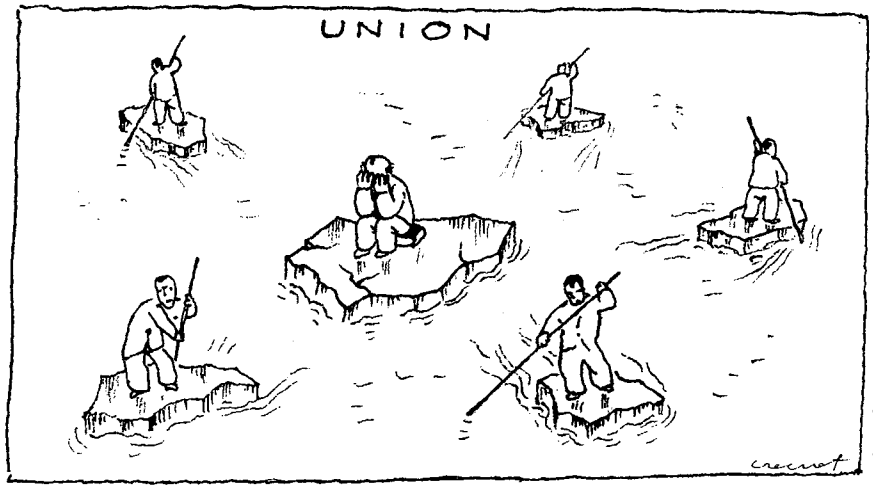
But willing hands and minds are a valuable resource. Despite the bad apples, most immigrants come here to work. They do the work no one else wants to do, from running shops in black ghettos to punching cows in Wyoming. They supply the low-cost labor we need, but which our welfare system has exterminated, to the detriment even of the drones.

Immigration of all sorts is actually low: about 650,000 people a year, .25 percent of the total population. Illegal immigration is less than a third of that, and declining, which is too bad. Illegals are willing to work hard for low pay, and they shun government offices, including welfare. In the illegal market, with people anxious to work cheaply as seamstresses, maids, and yard boys, we get a glimpse of what immigration in an unregulated economy would be like, and how we would all benefit.

Should immigration be opposed because there are too many people? For 15 years our fertility rates have been below replacement level. Do all immigrants go on welfare? Since they are a younger population than the natives, they tend to use less Social Security and Medicare welfare. And this is true for all "social services." Do immigrants "take jobs" from Americans? The question is economically ignorant. It not only posits a static view of the economy, with X jobs to be divided, but it is also an argument against college education and on-the-job training, both of which allow people to "take" jobs they would otherwise not have been able to get. In fact, most immigrants—because they are economically productive—help create jobs for others.

Nevertheless the fear, in these interventionist days, of immigrants gaining privileges through political pressure is a legitimate one. To assuage it, and for reasons of simple justice, all immigrants should be in effect guest workers. There is no right to vote nor to go on the dole; both ought to be denied permanently to immigrants. (And while we're at it, no American on welfare should be able to vote, either.)

Under today's egalitarian system, most immigrants come from culturally inharmonious places like Haiti and Iran instead of from Europe. That's why we should eliminate the quotas and free businessmen to hire (and fire)



Andrzej Czeczot

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without egalimania interfering. At present, businessmen can be fined for not hiring and for hiring Hispanics, by various federal civil rights and immigration enforcers.

Businessmen should also be free once again to do as they did in the 19th century: interview and hire contract workers in other countries. Labor unions lobbied to outlaw this practice, which insured that these immigrants — who came here as employees — would not become public charges.

But our ultimate goal should be to make our country a network of private neighborhoods. There is no right of public access to private property. If commercial districts were like malls, and communities had access restricted to the people the residents wanted — as some do today — we would not have to worry about bums and felons infesting our streets, nor about unwanted immigrants. If a community didn't want 50,000 Haitian AIDSophiliacs on their streets, they wouldn't be allowed there. *That* is the kind of society we ought to work for.

— Llewellyn H. Rockwell

RYAN WHITE'S DEATH in Indianapolis on Palm Sunday attracted nationwide attention. In retrospect, it is apparent that the initial public reaction to Ryan's illness, demanding his exclusion from school, was as unwarranted as it was cruel. However, it is important to recognize that when his disease was first diagnosed, in 1984, AIDS was still considered a "medical mystery." Its precise cause and means of transmission were unknown, but it was already very evident that it is a horribly virulent, uniformly fatal degenerative disease. Under the circumstances, the public's panicky reaction was understandable. If it had, in fact, turned out — as some authorities at first believed likely — that AIDS could be spread by casual contact, the panic would have spread and HIV carriers would certainly have been subject to quarantine as an essential public health measure.

The realization that AIDS is not transmitted by casual contact has made it possible for officialdom and a large part of the general public to react to AIDS with outpourings of sympathy and compassion rather than with, or at least as well as with, terror and hysteria. Would Elton John, Michael Jackson, and Donald Trump have demonstratively visited the dying lad if AIDS could be caught as easily as measles or chicken pox?

But there is a question that remains: while Ryan White was entering his prolonged death struggle, countless other Americans, young, middle-aged, and old, were dying of various causes around the country. On any given day, a major children's hospital will be treating many tiny cancer patients engaged in a painful, hopeless struggle with the disease. The nation's nursing homes and hospitals shelter thousands of victims of Alzheimer's disease, a disease which is not contagious at all, and the ravages of which impinge terribly on family as well as on health care personnel. But we do not read of the rich and famous flying to the bedside of the typical Alzheimer's or MS patient. We do not read of pilgrimages to the bedside of the patient dying of lung cancer.

The concentrated attention focused on Ryan White represents an underlying ambivalence in the attitude of our celebrities, the media, and the general public toward AIDS. On the one hand, if Ryan had caught AIDS as a teenaged homosexual prostitute, it is hardly conceivable that he would have been made the focal point of such an outpouring of love and compassion. On the other hand, the fact that he suffered as an "innocent" obscures the fact that his suffering was directly attributable to the "indecent acts" of the unknown blood donor who became infected and then — probably unknowingly — donated the contaminated blood that has now killed Ryan. Mysteriously, the very virulence of AIDS and the pitiable condition to which it reduces its victims before it inexorably kills them seems to be causing us to lose all awareness of the fact that AIDS is largely transmitted by behavior patterns that are — or ought to be — subject to a measure of individual and social control.

In a conference in Vevey, Switzerland, in 1987, I suggested that AIDS is having an impact on the theological and religious world rather like its impact on the immune system of its victims. The AIDS virus destroys the so-called T-4 lymphocytes, whose function is to alert the body's immune system to the presence of dangerous intrusion. The AIDS situation seems to be destroying the theological equivalent of T-4 lymphocytes, and while it renders theologians incapable of recognizing what is going on, it also lets down the spiritual and moral barriers that inhibit the rapid spread of fatal infections.

Would it not be prudent and logical, in the face of this uniformly fatal malady, for federal officials to do what they can to discourage conduct that spreads the disease? A White House source has informed us that the administration is under great pressure to drop restrictions that prevent AIDS patients from entering the United States. "Fortunately," he said — for he does not sympathize — "the restrictions are based on an act of Congress, and I can't picture Congress going on public record as voting to change them." Meanwhile the administration has created a ten-day visa that can be granted without inquiry into an applicant's HIV status — a small but definite concession to those who feel that AIDS should not disqualify a person from an entry visa. At the same time, visa applicants who have ever *had* tuberculosis — an infectious but curable disease — *are* still subject to restrictions. The argument with respect to AIDS is that admission of AIDS patients and HIV carriers is not a menace to public health, inasmuch as the virus cannot be transmitted by casual contact. However, in view of the fact that according to the most recent statistics, 85.4 percent of present AIDS victims are either male homosexuals or IV-drug users, or both, it is apparent that they *have* engaged in "high risk behavior" in the past, and there is no assurance that they would abstain while in the United States. The pressure on government to admit AIDS patients seems to be out of harmony with public health policy in other areas.

Another federal example: in an unusual "emergency hearing" Palm Sunday morning, federal judge Carl Rubin blocked the efforts of Hamilton County and Cincinnati authorities to halt the Contemporary Arts Center from exhibiting allegedly obscene photos by Robert Mapplethorpe, who died of AIDS in March of 1989. Federal judges do not, however, step in to prevent

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the efforts of public authorities to halt the display of traditional Nativity scenes at Christmas. Apparently we are to be grateful that the Mapplethorpe exhibition is not blasphemous, as otherwise the judge might have ordered the city to provide free shuttle buses.

—*Harold O.J. Brown*

SAN FRANCISCO, the AIDS capital of the nation, is presumably a city that should be open to a variety of views on how to combat the virus. As the experience of Dr. Lorraine Day of San Francisco General Hospital suggests, the greater the concentration of homosexuals and AIDS carriers in an area, the narrower the limits of the debate.

Until February 1 of this year, Dr. Day was the chief of orthopedic surgery at San Francisco General. She describes orthopedics, or skeletal surgery, as a kind of carpentry of the body. She sometimes uses high-speed drills and saws to rebuild patients who have been mangled in accidents or blasted by gunfire. Orthopedists frequently nick themselves with their tools or are struck with bone splinters while doing a job that is literally drenched with blood. "I work up to my armpits in blood," says Dr. Day; "I've been doing it for 15 years."

In the early 80's, when it was learned that AIDS is transmitted by blood, Dr. Day started asking the specialists in infectious diseases what chance there was of getting the virus from a cut or from a bloody bone splinter. She was assured that there was no chance at all. But on October 7, 1987—a date she will never forget—she learned that a nurse at the hospital had gotten AIDS by accidentally sticking herself with a contaminated needle. "My whole life passed before me," says Dr. Day, who is angry about the false assurances she was given. "Either those people should have known and didn't, or they knew and didn't tell us," she says.

Dr. Day began to study the AIDS literature herself, in an attempt to find out just how dangerous her work was. She learned, for example, that the HIV virus can stay alive in saliva at room temperature for seven days, and that it can survive freezing. AIDS has reportedly been contracted from transplants of frozen bone marrow. "This is not a fragile virus," she says.

She started asking her patients to take voluntary blood tests so that she would know what risk she ran during surgery, and she started wearing protective clothing. There has long been a head-to-toe suit that doctors wear when they put artificial parts, like new hip joints, into a patient's body. Bacteria, even in tiny quantities, cling to the parts and can cause infection, so doctors must isolate themselves completely from the patient. Even their breath is filtered to protect the patient. Dr. Day started wearing one of these suits during surgery. She also had the manufacturer install another filter to clean the air coming into the suit, since power tools can throw up a fine spray of blood.

Dr. Day also became curious to know how many HIV-positive patients came through her department, and started asking patients to take a blood test even if they could be treated without surgery. She learned that 10 to 30 percent of her patients were HIV-positive or in high-risk groups, and that during one aberrant month, the number was 90 percent. Her testing program made her famous. A homosexual patient, whose ankle fracture did not require surgery, refused to take the test and reported to the newspapers that he had been turned down for surgery because he would not take an AIDS test.

Newspapers and television stations marveled at the doctor who wore a "space suit" during surgery, and homosexual groups charged her with anti-AIDS hysteria. When she began to speak her mind about AIDS, things got worse. "The disease has been handled politically rather than medically," she says. "If it had been handled like any other communicable disease, it would be under control by now." She has campaigned for routine testing, contact tracing, and mandatory reporting as is done with carriers of venereal disease.

Precisely because she favors measures that would *reduce* the chances that susceptible people will catch the disease, Dr. Day has been accused of hating these people. Dr. Laurens White, past president of the California Medical Association, has been quoted as calling her a "right-wing fanatic," who thinks that homosexuals and drug users are the "scum of the earth."

Michael Shriver of ACT-UP/San Francisco (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) says she is "a sick, sick, sick, sick person." Since Dr. Day has been asked to lecture about AIDS, Mr. Shriver accuses her of "turning fear of AIDS into a money-making venture." He calls contact tracing "a totally discredited concept," and points to the risk of employer or insurance carrier discrimination against people known to have AIDS. An AIDS carrier himself, he refuses to acknowledge that the risk uninfected people run of getting a fatal disease should be weighed in the balance against the risk of discrimination against a carrier.

Dr. Day is no longer doing surgery at San Francisco General. She finally decided that day-in-day-out contact with infected blood was a risk she had run for long enough. She has voluntarily moved her practice to the University of California at San Francisco, where there are far fewer AIDS patients. "I had operated on as many or more AIDS patients than anyone else in the country, and I figured I had been on the front lines long enough," she says; "I have an obligation to stay alive and raise my family. It's time for somebody else to take over."

—*Jared Taylor*

THE 1980's WERE supposed to be the conservative decade. Not in Fairfax County, Virginia. This past winter at Annandale High, the school's students fought a battle over placing a $40 advertisement from a homosexual "youth group" in the school paper.

Offered by the "Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League" (SMYAL), which is based in Washington, D.C.'s Dupont Circle, the city's cultural, recreational, and financial mecca for homosexuals, the ad "invites you [homosexual and lesbian students] to join our discussion group every Saturday from noon to 3 p.m." The ad also offered its "HELP" line, begging the question of what sort of help this group would like to offer and who the helpers are. One also might ask why suburban youngsters truly confused about their sexuality should hike to the middle of Washington, presumably without parental permission, for a skull session with

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SMYAL that would reinforce their confusion.

At Annandale High the main argument was between the paper's editor, Margie Brown, who represented the majority of staff members, and Matt McGuire, who represented himself and one other student. In opposing the ad, Mr. McGuire wondered "what sort of position do we [the school and newspaper] want to have in the community," noting: "The idea of being associated with gays and lesbians—it bothers me." "I think we should put [the ad] in," Miss Brown opined at the time. "If we're told whose money to accept, then that's censorship."

Miss Brown's remarks are pregnant with all sorts of political and cultural assumptions about the nature of our Constitution, our legal system, and morals and values themselves. The first is that homosexuals have some sort of "right" to publish propaganda in a public school newspaper and that the newspaper itself has a "right," even an obligation, to publish any advertisement coming down the pike.

We can also gather that Miss Brown thinks some sort of politically objectionable bowdlerism is motivating the McGuires of this world, "censorship" being a moral crime comparable to murder and robbery. Apparently, Miss Brown doesn't care about SMYAL's invitation to reinforce behavior that not only violates sodomy laws, but also core American values. Miss Brown's side, the one favoring homosexual recruitment, won in a landslide vote of the staff members: 19 for the ad, 2 against.

The question is why school kids like Miss Brown think defending heterosexuality and the traditional American family has become what some are calling a "hate crime."

Fairfax County's public school sexed program was once scheduled to include a lesson on "autoerotic asphyxia." Thus does Fairfax County offer more than one instance of morally confused administrators and students run amok. It is a cardinal example of the danger of turning junior's education over to the state.

—*R. Cort Kirkwood*

THE YALE LIT. has returned, but not in the form that some *Chronicles* readers may remember from the early 80's, when Andrei Navrozov was editor. The undergraduate magazine (est. 1836) he turned into a national quarterly of arts, letters, and politics finished its run through the courts in 1986 and has now returned to the hands of Yale undergraduates.

For most of its 150-year history *The Yale Literary Magazine* was an independent, privately funded magazine edited by and for Yale undergrads. When in 1978 it seemed to be going under for a final time, due to lack of student interest and lack of funds, Yale senior Navrozov and some fellow students bought it for the token sum of one dollar. At that point they had the university's blessing. But when the magazine they produced proved to have both metered poetry and funding from some conservative foundations, this was too much for the Yale English department. They were hearing heresy from what they felt to be their own pulpit.

John Hollander, John Hersey and the like, with the help of then Yale President A. Bartlett Giamatti, decided to put the magazine out of business. Their strategy was to vilify the magazine's editors and to change the rules that defined Navrozov's legal relationship to the university. Once the matter went to court Yale's deep pockets were paired against the fundraising/PR machine of one Russion émigré and his American wife. The case went to the Connecticut Supreme Court, but he who has the more expensive lawyers will always win. Yale did its best to focus the debate on the deprived undergraduates, but the core issue was always censorship, as some early-on, unguarded comments by people like Professor Hollander show. At Yale "academic freedom" is a real oxymoron.

All that is ancient history, and it has been over six years since I spent part of my senior year testifying not only as one of the *Lit.*'s student editors but as the corporate publisher's third officer. Most people insisted students didn't exist at the *Lit.*, or were only shills for Navrozov. But I learned the basics of editing and copyediting there, and about hot type and four-color printing, and the only time I had any luck getting a piece out of Annie Dillard was when I was 19 and at the *Lit.*, though I've been trying ever since.

I remember thinking, my first week at Yale, that I could do anything I wanted, and that what I wanted to do was work on a magazine. But I also remember thinking that I'll be hanged if I'm going to waste my time writing for some newsprint horror with purposefully ugly charcoal drawings and poetry that goes like this: "peepholes get bolted to the eyes / throttled with an archipelago of squats / drizzling hosiery about the floor / the trumpets trumpets of strumpets / finger the clotted lips / oh crank out an overture on that organ grinder / would you / will not faint I will not faint I will not . . ."

I ended up working with Andrei Navrozov and his wife, Kathleen Kilpatrick, because they were serious: they were putting out a magazine for adults, running poetry and essays by the likes of Philip Larkin and E.M. Cioran and Lewis Lapham, reproducing art by Ferdinand Botero and Tamara de Lempicka. What the *Lit.* is publishing now is that poem above. The back cover of the winter 1989 issue shows a young man in a hospital bed, with his half-shaved head banded by some steel contraption; evidently he is recovering from brain surgery. It is the exploitation of disease masquerading as art *à la* Diana Arbus; it is the great *fin de siècle* Yale undergraduate aesthetic, and it stinks.

Yale fought us bitterly to win back the *Lit.* "in trust for the students," and the students now editing the *Lit.* are repaying this trust in full. Because Navrozov's terrible crime was to "ignore" Yale undergrads, it is important to Andrew Cohen, Yale '91 and the present publisher, to emphasize that his editorial board is independent of any adult. But his first issue featured an interview with French Professor Denis Hollier ("How did you become inter-

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ested in Sartre?") and future plans include a similarly amiable chat with Harold Bloom, Yale's most influential critic. Andrew and his friends have learned the all-important number-one lesson of journalism: that flattery takes on a whole new dimension when it's typeset, and that the publicity of the press is really, really helpful in winning friends and influencing people.

I want to go on record as taking back every snide comment I've ever made about student protesters in the 60's: nothing is so terrifying as the modern Yalie's love for *quid pro quo*.

Perhaps I should not blame Andrew Cohen and his friends so much, you say: their *Lit.* is no different from any other college magazine, and as for what they know about the old *Lit.*, they are just parroting back what their elders have told them, and what more can you expect? But let me quote what Andrew said in full, when I asked him what he thought of Navrozov's era at the magazine: "I don't want to comment," he began, but then continued: "I don't want to make any political statement. I will say that I think the *Lit.* should reflect the interest and concerns and problems and discourse of the Yale undergraduate community, and under Navrozov it didn't. I also think the Yale art community should be represented—and the Yale art community *wasn't* represented in the pasty pastel landscapes that surrounded Navrozov's editorial."

I've been trying to think which issue he could have seen: the one with Botero? William Bailey? Elie Nadelman? Igor Galanin? For those of you who haven't seen the new *Lit.*, Andrew's comment above, his nicely distilled hatred of anything beautiful, should give you the idea. You may believe that a magazine founded by Yale students should be under the thumb of the Dean's office, which is what "back to the students" has meant in practical terms; or you may hate all Russians and all conservatives—I don't care, we could still have a conversation. But what do you do with a person who cannot understand why de Lempicka is wonderful while Hannaline Rogenberg's oil of a nude woman carrying a nude woman corpse on the back of the Spring 1989 newly-revived-and-purified all-undergraduate *Yale Literary Magazine* is not? I could deconstruct my English, I could take a stab at "discourse"; but even then the *Lit.*'s new editors would not understand.

—*Katherine Dalton*

Principalities & Powers

by Samuel Francis

On the same day last year that the Supreme Court sliced a few ounces of flesh out of its 1973 *Roe* v. *Wade* decision on abortion, it also carved up an American tradition governing the public observance of Christmas. In the case of *Allegheny* v. *ACLU*, the Court held that Allegheny County in Pennsylvania could not display a Christian Nativity scene without also surrounding it with symbols of secularism. In the same decision, however, the Court ruled that because authorities in Pittsburgh had put up symbols of Hanukkah alongside Christian symbols, that display was not an endorsement of a particular sect or doctrine but only a tip of the city's hat to the idea of religion in general. Presumably, if your city next year similarly honors Quetzalcoatl or Apollo the Mouse-Slayer, along with the more mundane Christian and Jewish faiths, the ACLU will leave you alone.

But in the Allegheny case, the ACLU was not the real plaintiff. That honor belongs to one Malik Tunador, a Moslem on whose behalf the ACLU brought the suit and saw it through to the final wisdom imparted by the nine unelected magistrates who rule America. Most of the sensible journalistic commentary on the case at the time dwelled on such staple themes as the dangers of judicial activism, social engineering under the guise of civil liberties, and triumphant secularism. All of these were apposite, but there is another that relates to the person of Mr. Tunador himself and that seems to have been lost in the verbal underbrush: namely, what happens to a nation's cultural identity when unassimilated aliens within it gain political power and legal rights?

Mr. Tunador's passion to rid Allegheny County of public endorsements of Judeo-Christian symbolism is not unique. Last year also, adherents of the Caribbean voodoo cult Santeria, who worship, among others, an odd god called "Babalu" and slaughter animals to his glory, brought suit against Miami in an effort to overturn that city's animal protection laws so they could adore their bloodthirsty deity with impunity. They lost the first round in court, but they haven't given up, and, Babalu willing, they may yet prevail over the forces of repression. Actually, letting Santeria devotees chop up dogs and chickens may be preferable to tolerating the liturgies of closely related cults also being imported into this country. In 1989 a gang of drug smugglers from Mexico kidnapped an American youth, cut off his legs, and buried his corpse in the desert as part of a ceremony to avoid capture.

It's probably unlikely that adherents of Babalu and similar divinities will become Episcopalians any time soon. For that matter, it's also improbable that such newcomers will convert to the constitutional republicanism that historically has governed the politics of the United States, traces its ancestry to British and Western European roots, and is virtually unknown in the Third World today. Nor should we expect too many of our new citizens to adopt the social and moral institutions that most Euro-Americans have long followed and on which our government, legal system, economy, and indeed the education, arts, and sciences of our higher civilization rest. Not since the Salem witch trials of the late 17th century have Americans expressed much faith in the kind of paleolithic sorcery that the animalistic creeds of the Third World are now fetching hither, but their primitive paganism may soon percolate into our pantheon and permanently alter the basic assumptions and values of our national culture.

Indeed, for all the clichés among the professional xenophiles about the "strong family values" that the new

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immigrants are bringing to our exhausted society, many of the pilgrims appear to carry on a highly lucrative traffic in prostitution, narcotics, baby-selling, and other quaint Third World customs. Today no less than 20 percent of the population of the federal prison system consists of aliens, and Representative Lamar Smith of Texas, ranking Republican on the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and International Law, notes that "What's worse is that seven out of eight [criminal] aliens are either released or given probation and never serve time in prison." He also says that present deportation procedures take so much time to send alien lawbreakers back to their fatherlands "that we're talking about a massive problem, with potentially hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens who have committed crimes."

Obviously, not all, not even most, Third World immigrants are murderous cultists, drug dealers, or deadbeats, but the stereotype of the new Americans as hardworking mathematical geniuses who start computer industries and carry the amenities of Seven-Eleven civilization into the inner cities is no less exaggerated. If even a small percentage of the several million illegal aliens who meander across our borders every year is criminal, that alone is sufficient reason to stop the influx and expedite deportations.

The larger point is that even immigrants who want to assimilate often can't, since a culture consists largely of unspoken and unconscious beliefs and behavior produced by long immersion in a particular institutional environment. The cultural apparatus that immigrants bring with them cannot be discarded, nor can the apparatus of the host country be adopted, as easily as American tourists exchange sombreros and pith helmets for black ties and evening gowns on their Club Med safaris. Learning English, getting a job, and wearing Western clothes in themselves betoken only minimal assimilation, and they mean nothing with respect to absorption of the underlying habits that define a culture and distinguish it from others. The names of two famous immigrants in American history illustrate what ought to be obvious to common sense. Both gentlemen arrived here in their early youth, grew up poor, and through hard work became eminently successful in their chosen professions. Both came to speak English fluently and dressed impeccably. But to their dying days there remained something about Al Capone and Lucky Luciano that just wasn't American.

One fundamental part of a nation's culture that no immigrant can possibly assimilate is its past. Even today, to some descendants of immigrants who came here in the late 19th or 20th centuries, the names of battles like Gettysburg and Lexington are as remote as the medieval carnage at Tewkesbury and Bosworth Field. It is one thing to learn the military and political history of a country from schoolbooks, but it's not the same as having ancestors who fought it and endured it and whose participation in long stretches of the national experience has been passed down to their posterity by word of mouth and inheritance. If Abraham Lincoln were to deliver his Gettysburg Address today, he could not possibly speak of "our forefathers" without being accused of insensitivity by the descendants of those who didn't arrive until it was considerably safer to be an American.

Nor does the ambition of many immigrants to enjoy the civil liberties and political freedoms of the United States necessarily imply any deep loyalty to or understanding of what allows our political culture to flourish. Just because you're running for your life from death squads and secret police doesn't mean you know much about the First Amendment or the incorporation doctrine, the separation of powers or the rule of law. Even many British immigrants to the United States often find the concept of federalism almost incomprehensible, and they discover fewer and fewer Americans who can explain it accurately. Moreover, only a small number of immigrants are willing or able to abandon entirely the prejudices and preconceptions that animate their own politics back home, and they often bring their strange animosities and enthusiasms with them in their baggage. The various ethnic constituencies whose never-ending quarrels and quibbles seem to determine the content of American foreign policy suggest that many who think of themselves as Americans are really little more than transplanted foreigners. In the last several years, one of the most dangerous sources of terrorist activity in the United States has consisted of aliens—from Iran, Libya, Central America, the Middle East, Armenia, etc.—who insist on importing their own local fixations, ethnic or ideological, to these shores.

The ethnic, racial, and cultural mosaic into which the United States, for the first time in its history, is metamorphosing suggests that eventually it will go the way of just about every other multicultural society in human history. The late Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and the dominions of the Habsburgs and the Romanovs, among others, all presided over a kind of rainbow coalition of nations and peoples, who for the most part managed to live happily because their secret compulsions to spill each other's blood were restrained by the overwhelming power of the despots and dynasties who ruled them. Political freedom relies on a shared political culture as much as on the oppositions and balances that social differentiation creates, and when the common culture disintegrates under the impact of mass migrations, only institutionalized force can hold the regime together. Mr. Gorbachev and his satraps are discovering this truth even now as their bureaucratic empire decomposes into national and ethnic fragments that contest for dominance. It is ironic that the long-suppressed nations of the Eurasian Heartland seem to be on the eve of satisfying their aspirations for political identity and cultural renaissance even as the American nation faces oblivion.

Whether new Americans like Citizen Tunador and the worshipers at the shrine of Babalu will be happy in the new Moslemo-Santerio-Buddho-Confucio-Judeo-Christian society they are trying to create is dubious. Of course, if their creation is not to their liking, they can always pick up and hoof it somewhere else, and since they've already done so once, maybe they won't mind moving on again. But those Americans who remain loyal to the national heritage their forefathers created or received may find it more difficult to locate an adequate substitute for what massive and uncontrolled immigration is helping to destroy. ◇

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Anna Mycek-Wodecki

A Not So Wonderful Life

by Thomas Fleming

"To us your good Samaritan was a fool to risk the security of his family to help a stranger."
—Joey Tai in Michael Cimino's *Year of the Dragon*

It has been more than a year since we put out the March 1989 number of *Chronicles*, "A Nation of Immigrants," in which it was suggested that the United States had a political and cultural interest in regaining control over its borders. By now everyone must be tired of reading about the controversy that ensued, but I shall make one last effort to explain our intentions, then and now. The best way to accomplish this will be to answer a number of questions that have been raised by our critics.

If you read only the mercenary press, by which I mean editorial columns and "opinion magazines," our discussion of immigration exiled us forever from the delightful company of really important people. Actually, the response was varied, ranging from enthusiasm: "I'm glad someone had the guts to tackle this subject honestly and without hysteria," to polite disagreement: "I think you are wrong, but I don't see what all the fuss is about—most people are wrong most of the time," to a gleeful Aha!: "I always knew you were a bigot, and at last I have the evidence." Most of our readers, if I can judge from letters and telephone calls, sympathized either with our position or with our plight.

Some of our detractors have been just clever enough to detect a pattern in our editorial themes. They are right. We do take an especial interest in political and social issues that are connected with what we sometimes call the "American identity" and at other times the "national interest." In recent numbers of the magazine we have talked about: the degradation experienced by the many of our citizens who are bound to that system of voluntary non-labor we call welfare, the collapse of standards in all the institutions of our cultural life—education, literature, and the arts, our crumbling infrastructure and lagging performance in the world's economy, the gradual erosion of sovereignty as the United States cedes its power and interest to international bodies and to the ideology of human rights, the extinction of the old republican ideals of responsible citizenship, and the moral decay that we measure daily in rates of divorce, abortion, child molestation, illegitimacy, AIDS cases, drug use, and business fraud.

Faced with this transformation of a decent republican nation into an empire of consumerism and self-gratification, some "conservatives" cry out "Hurray for capitalism and for the triumph of individualism." I attend their conferences and read their newsletters proclaiming the triumph of conservative principles and urging their fellow conservatives to bear the burden of government, and I wonder what world they are living in. Are Washington, D.C., and New York City really so distant from America that they do not know what is going on out here? Or are they so deafened by the rattle of their begging bowls that they cannot hear the complaints of the men on the street?

There are a few simple things that most Americans, liberal as well as conservative, used to take for granted. We used to believe that there was such a thing as the United States, a nation with its own history, traditions, and culture; that we as American citizens had the obligation to maintain our national integrity and identity against any nation, movement, or population that by accident or design posed a

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threat. It is not xenophobic to admire the Japanese and wish them well, without at the same time wanting to become like them, and it is not bigotry to discuss the advantages of trade and immigration policies that might serve the national interest rather than the global economy or the UN declaration of human rights.

This general position of ours is moral and cultural; it does not lead necessarily to any specific policy on trade, any definite set of quotas on immigration. It does, however, generate answers to many of the questions most frequently raised by people on the other side.

The most respectable arguments for open borders come from libertarians, who rest their case on a general philosophical point. Access to markets of trade and labor, they argue, is a fundamental human right that ought not be abridged. I respect their position, without subscribing to it, and will go so far as to say that prudence and history both suggest that government intervention in these matters is more often productive of evil than of good.

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Our survival depends upon our willingness to look reality in the face.

◆

But, I ask my libertarian friends, what basically are you defending—an abstract principle of freedom or the real liberties enjoyed by Americans? If it is just any freedom to do as one likes in a state of nature, then the conversation is entirely hypothetical. But if we are talking about such down-to-earth facts as limited government, the absence of national identity cards, freedom of movement within the country, then it becomes a question of trade-offs. Very few of our precious liberties are enjoyed by the peoples of Nigeria or China or Bolivia, and there is no reason to suppose that those countries will become hospitable to libertarian principles any time in the near future. The United States has demonstrated a considerable capacity for transforming immigrants into Americans—although its best successes have been with Europeans who share at least some of our traditions—but the time has come to wonder whether we are not beginning to strain that capacity. What will it be like in the next century, when—as *Time* so cheerfully predicts—white people will be in a minority? Ah well, every cloud has a silver lining, and once we join the ranks of Third World nations, we won't have to worry about a flood of immigrants.

A number of compromise positions have been entertained in conversations with libertarians. For example, we could allow people into the country on six-month work permits (as they do in Switzerland) and still jealously protect our citizenship and our borders. We could also make immigration policy contingent upon welfare policy, either by forbidding welfare to any but native-born Americans, establishing a waiting period (ten or twenty years) on eligibility for welfare, or tying the two together in an inverse relationship: the more generous we are with welfare, the stingier we have to be with immigration, and vice versa.

Of course, if we left this in the hands of the libertarians, there wouldn't be any welfare state to begin with, and I do not lie awake at night worrying about a libertarian takeover in the United States. We have gone so far in the direction of statism, that a ten-year imposition of liberty could only be a blessing.

The key to understanding the argument is the level of discourse. The libertarians take their stand on principle; the "Big Government Conservatives" in New York and Washington attack motives. It is all, they say, a question of greedy self-interest: "These nationalists and protectionists," they whisper, "are all in the pay of Southern textile manufacturers." They do not even balk at calling Anthony Harrigan a socialist.

Let me go on record as welcoming contributions from textile manufacturers, the tobacco lobby, and the automobile industry. I only wish we received enough money from protectionist businessmen to threaten our integrity. But we do not. Of course, this charge of self-interested nationalism invites the counter-charge of self-interested *inter*nationalism.

In whose interest, after all, is unrestricted immigration or free trade? Some (by no means all) liberal Democrats obviously sense a great opportunity. They have lost much of the blue-collar constituency that was essential to the New Deal coalition, and their traditional bastion of strength, the South, has turned its back on the party of Jesse Jackson. What better recruitment device could there be than to import a set of ready-made minorities who can be put on the dole and taught to practice the politics of envy?

There is, of course, a fairly small number of committed one-worlders who would like to turn over everything to something like the United Nations. But they are on the losing side of history, if only because they have been stupid enough to announce their aims. I put my money on the advocates of East/West convergence, North/South dialogue, and the World Bank—those who believe that the world should be ruled by a coalition of top corporate executives, military leaders, and technocrats.

Working in tandem with the Jimmy Carter Democrats are the Rainbow Coalition conservatives in Washington, who think they can put the New Deal alliance back together, and the Democratic Globalist conservatives, who have borrowed the principle of continuous revolution from Mao and Trotsky. The ultimate aim of both (they are, after all, mostly the same people) is a confederation of social democratic nations trading peacefully under an umbrella of multinational corporations: "Imagine everybody, living life in peace."

If the only choice today were between the leftist internationalism of the one-worlders and the rightist internationalism of free-trade-open-borders-democratic-globalism, then an American who loved his country would be better off canceling all his subscriptions and watching old movies on the VCR. At least in the films of John Ford and Howard Hawks and Frank Capra, we can catch a glimpse of the old America of our dreams.

It is no accident that of the two filmmakers who arguably did the most to define celluloid America, John Ford and Frank Capra, the one (born Sean O'Feeney) was the son of Irish immigrants, the other an immigrant from Sicily. The

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films of John Ford have been discussed more than once in these pages. All I will say about them now is that all the mythic themes of 19th-century America can be found in such movies as *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, *The Searchers*, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, and *Cheyenne Autumn*, and what Ford was to the last century, Capra was to the mid-20th century.

For most Americans Frank Capra is remembered for one film: *It's a Wonderful Life*, done to death simultaneously on every cable channel throughout the holiday season. If there is anyone who does not know the story by now, I will not be the one to enlighten him. But one segment of the film turned out to be remarkably prophetic. When George Bailey is given the chance to see what his town would have been like if he had never lived, in place of Bedford Falls we are given a vision of Potterville, a factory town filled with mean streets, gin joints, and cynical characters who might have escaped from 40's film noir into a screwball comedy.

This celebrator of the old America and all that it was doing for immigrants was an Italian who cheerfully attached himself to his adopted nation's ideals. In his autobiography, Capra explained that he made the sort of pictures he did in order to pay back the country that had been so kind to him. Not all Italians adapted so readily, but when they were left alone in their own neighborhoods, Italian-Americans minded their own business, reared their own families, served in the Armed Forces, and refused to constitute themselves as a voting bloc or interest vote.

Unlike my Irish relatives who devoted themselves so enthusiastically to the Democratic machine, the Italians until recently largely stayed out of politics. Perhaps it was the language barrier or the fact that so many came from Sicily and Southern Italy—an area that approached the Third World in poverty. But Italians turned a disability into a virtue. By remaining what they were, they took a long time in becoming fully American, but they did not have to pass through the anti-American phase of so many other immigrant groups.

I am not afraid of ethnic enclaves or the persistence of Old World folkways on American soil, especially when it is an ethnic group, no matter how apparently alien, with whom we share part of our history and part of our culture. An Italian will boast of Cicero and Vergil, Dante and Michelangelo, Verdi and Puccini; all of this we are prepared to appreciate, and our lives are richer for it. Even the strangest aspect of his culture—the cuisine—has been somehow incorporated into our own, and Americans have been attempting to eat Italian since Jefferson began serving pasta to his guests.

This cultural mixing of Italians and Germans and Slavs and Jews and Scandinavians into an already established Anglo-American mold is a strange and perilous experiment, but it is one that we must make work, if we are to survive. Our survival, however, depends upon our willingness to look reality in the face. There are limits to elasticity, and these limits are defined in part by our historical connections with the rest of Europe and in part by the rate of immigration. High rates of non-European immigration, even if the immigrants come with the best intentions in the world, will swamp us. Not all, I hasten to say, do come with the best intentions. Once upon a time, the grateful immigrant was the norm. Now he is an anomaly in a nation where foreigners are hardly off the boat or under the wire before they are squabbling with their traditional enemies. The Serbs and Croats, for example, are engaged in a metaphorical genocide over each group's representation at Voice of America. Why don't we import several million each, Armenians and Azeris, or Iraqis and Iranians, and let them fight it out in Nebraska or Jersey City? Why don't we turn the whole United States into Miami, which now bears the nickname "city of immigrants"?

Frank Capra saw the future, and realized that without people like George Bailey it is Potterville. It is the world of our generation, an America that has gone from Jimmy Stewart to Mickey Rourke and John Travolta and Madonna. Why? If there is a film that captures the difference, it is *The Year of the Dragon*, directed by another patriotic Italo-American, Michael Cimino. Mickey Rourke plays a Polish cop (who has changed his name to White) trying to clean up New York's Chinatown. It is not a struggle between WASPs and hyphenated Americans, but a crusade waged by an immigrant's son who served his tour in Vietnam and came back to discover that he had to fight against the same things in New York: drugs, a brutal disregard for human life, and "thousands of years" of Chinese civilization. Stanley White's answer is brutal and direct:

> You people think gambling and extortion are kosher because it's a thousand years old. All this thousand year old stuff is s--t to me. This is America you're living in, and it's 200 years old, so you better get your clocks fixed.

Blame it on the New Deal. Blame it on the schools. Blame it on the media. Blame it on the inevitable decay and fossilization that overtakes all republican institutions. Blame it on whatever or whomever you like, but remember this. So long as this was, fundamentally, an Anglo-American country with Anglo-American culture, language, and heroes, we knew who we were as a nation, whatever our individual backgrounds were. So far as I know, I don't have a drop of real English blood in my veins, and I grew up meeting and hearing of relatives from all over Europe—the Balkans, Scandinavia, and Britain. I take a personal interest in all of my ancestral groups and have even gone so far as to study their languages (except Norwegian), but insofar as I am an American, I am also English in the same way some tree-worshiping Celt or skull-swilling German had to become a Roman if he was to live within the empire.

If we really are the last generation of Anglo-Americans, then we are also the last generation of Americans, period. Let the Japanese buy the Washington Monument; go ahead and flood the country with Indian and Pakistani doctors and engineers whom, if we had a particle of charity toward Third World nations, we would compel to return home and serve their own people; get rich on bribes from foreign businesses; write editorials on how everyone else in the world would make a better American than the present population. Because, if we continue the cultural and moral slide that took us from the world of Frank Capra to the world of Michael Cimino, in thirty or forty years there won't be an America worth slandering or selling out. ◈

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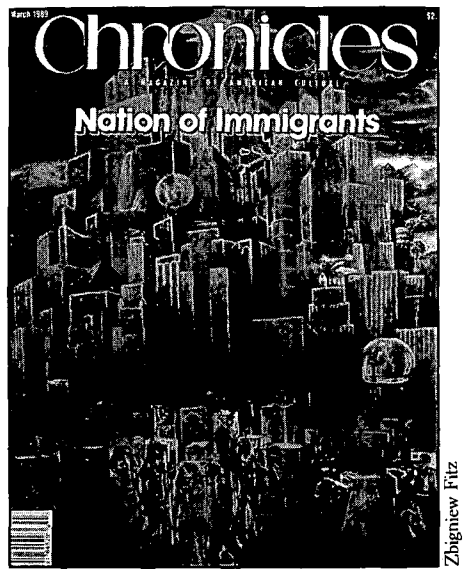

Zbigniew Fitz

The Pros and Cons of Immigration

A DEBATE

JACOB NEUSNER
Graduate Research Professor of Humanities and Religious Studies, University of South Florida
Martin Buber Professor of Judaic Studies, University of Frankfurt

Immigration nourishes America, affirming the power of its national ideal: a society capable of remaking the entire world in the image of humanity in democracy. No country in the world other than this distant magnet of ours exercises so compelling a power to win for itself the commitment of strangers: we want to be with you and like you, share what is yours and give what is ours to share. When we lose faith in the power of this country and its unique social system to take the foreigner and make the stranger one of us—in our image, after our likeness—and make ourselves over too, we shall deny the power that has made us unique among other nations.

The perpetual encounter with the other, the faith in our way of life that gives us confidence in our power to change and to be changed by the stranger—these on-going experiences, and the attitudes that make them possible, explain who we are as a nation. So far as ours is a story bearing direction and meaning, it is the tale of newcomers coming to be changed by, and to change, the country and its land. Ours has been a history of immigration from the start to today: first came the West Europeans and Africans, then the East Europeans and Asians, and now South Asians and Latin Americans, all colors, shapes, sizes, languages. No other nation in history and none today exercises such power over the mind and imagination of outsiders.

Those of us who regard the social order as critical, who see the laws and institutions and traditions of this country as the best humanity has ever had, must find the immigrants' commitment a rich resource for conserving all that we affirm. For the immigrant, whether my mother's grandmother, leaving as a young woman from Odessa, or this morning's young Irish woman from Dublin, or young black man from Jamaica, or Mexican crossing a border that, a hundred and fifty years ago, did not separate him from his destination in the north, looks for a better life, takes initiative, shows the enterprise that sustains the free economy. Immigration brings to this country the already grown-up and ready to work, the already educated: a rich investment in nurture and education by foreign economies has readied the immigrant for productive work with us, in this country.

Though with Thomas Fleming I find myself in agreement on most issues, on the real American dilemma, as he characterizes immigration, I cannot concur. His seems to me to be not a conservative position at all, since conservative opinion has always affirmed the power of received traditions and institutions to govern the social order. And our system has not only accommodated difference but has always been nurtured and perpetually been nourished by it. America has stood from the beginning for the capacity to make of anyone a real American. Conservative opinion, favoring as it does the rights and immunities of Americans, cannot now despair of the tradition that, from the first, has defined this society.

Migration from what he calls the Third World as much as

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the First and Second ones replenishes our work force; absent jobs, people would not come, or would come and go home (as many do). Ours is not a declining population, like that of Europe. But unlike the Europeans, we can make Americans of the dark-skinned as much as the light-skinned people, Muslims as much as Anglicans, Hindus as much as Jews. A German professor once said to me, speaking of the Turkish immigrants in Germany, "But they can never really become Germans like us. They are not even Christian." I: "Yes, so the Jews found out too." But for us, there is nothing un-American about Muslim faith, and the Turk as much as the Italian or the Pole or the Norwegian or the Brazilian or the Mexican will in due course find a home and a welcome here. That is how it has always been. Our system—our social order—being what it is, that is how it always will be.

My great grandmother knew nothing of the "Pilgrim Fathers," but Thanksgiving Day is very much mine. And the Chicano youngster in California will one day identify, as much as I do, with the Declaration of Independence. True, my family would bring to America a different religion from the dominant one and so would change America, and the Chicano today brings us a second language—Spanish in addition to English, one that may last longer than did Polish or Yiddish or Italian or Norwegian or Finnish, each in its day. I hope it does, because through Spanish, which opens to us the experience of a whole world to our south, we shall be a still more interesting country than we already are: more of humanity's experience will be ours.

Why then wish we all could be what America really never was, a false vision of an America that was all white, though we have always been black as well as white; all Protestant, though we have never known a merely narrowly-defined single Protestant faith; all descended from the normal Northern and Western European lines (but then, better English than German, better Scottish than Irish)? Now there is no turning back. For there is no past to which to turn for the normal, by which to declare the present abnormal, except a meretricious and fabricated one. I shall fear for America when nearly everybody in the world no longer wants to come and become one with us.

Race a problem? Nothing new about that. If it is a problem, it began in 1619, when the first Africans were forcibly brought to this country, and not in 1865 or in 1945. Racial diversity has characterized this country from the beginning: black, red, white, joined by yellow and brown. A nation "no longer stratified simply by class" has always been hierarchized by race, and if today racial groups compete on racial terms alone for top positions, that is something to which we conservatives have long objected in the name of the hierarchy of talent. So, in all, I find in the newest mass migration only evidence for the astonishing success of the American system. No other nation in the world has the power that we take for granted, to take to ourselves millions of people, decade by decade, and accord to them all the same opportunity that the native-born enjoy. Black, yellow, white, red, brown—these all are the all-American colors and shades of skin; it is much too late to conceive otherwise, and the same is so of language and religion and the geographical origins of one's family. And I wouldn't want it any other way: a greater, not a smaller, America surely stands for what we conservatives affirm. ◇

JOHN LUKACS
Author, *Outgrowing Democracy* and *Confessions of an Original Sinner*

Thomas Fleming's article ("The Real American Dilemma," *Chronicles*, March 1989) was a deeply felt and yet moderate statement about a condition that, in this historian's opinion, is even more than a dilemma. It is the great, perhaps the greatest, American problem. It is a pity that it is not publicly (though it is often privately) so recognized by Americans. It is to the honor of *Chronicles* for having recognized it thus.

Upon the invitation of *Chronicles* I will try to sum up, necessarily briefly and at the cost of precision, my beliefs and anxieties concerning this vast problem.

We face not only immigration but migration, too. The first, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, means "to settle in a country (not one's own)." The second means "to pass from one place to another." "Migration" suggests impermanence: a nomadic, or near-nomadic condition of existence. "Immigration" suggests something more definite: a more-or-less orderly purpose, "to settle." In the present crisis in the United States these two categories overlap. They are indistinct, to the peril of this nation. The American government and its military instruments have largely lost control over their southern borders. If that is not a matter of national security (that inflated, corrupted, and overused term) I do not know what is.

The conditions of electoral arithmetic and of public discourse lead to a conscious avoidance of this subject. The advocacies of our—so-called—conservatives are as opportunistic and thoughtless as those of our—so-called—liberals.

Entire generations of American youth have now been unaware that, no matter what the present ethnic composition of the United States, the inherited freedoms of this country are not abstract liberties but freedoms bequeathed to Americans from the British Isles, largely during the 18th century, from which all of the constitutional principles of this country derive.

All of this becomes especially important now when tribal and racial ambitions in many parts of the world are erupting

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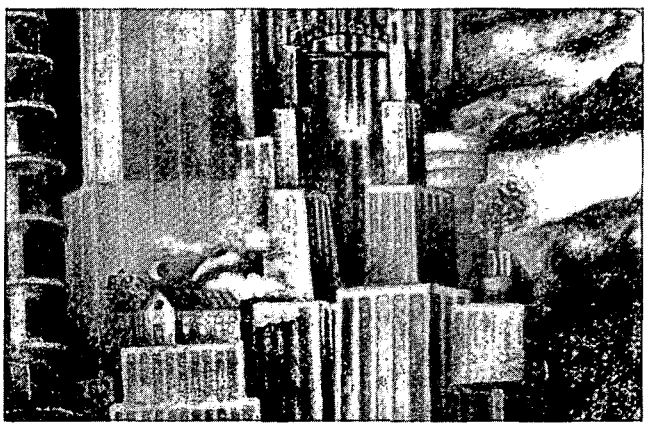
at the same time when large-scale migrations have begun. To believe that the United States, because of some divine dispensation, or in virtue of the abundance of automobiles and color television sets available to its population, is or will be immune to those dangers of centrifugal crumbling that now beset the Russian Empire, is not only thoughtless but irresponsible. These present and future dangers include not only tribal savagery and domestic disorders but the potential disruption of the very framework of the Republic.

That is the prime matter of American national security: not whether Americans should or should not support Afghans or Azerbaijanis or Bessarabians or Nicaraguans or Honduran "Freedom Fighters"; nor, as Section Nine of the platform of the Republican Party as early as 1956 (!) stated, that our aim should be "the establishment of American naval and air bases *all around the world.*" The italics are mine. ◁

LAWRENCE A. UZZELL
John M. Olin Media Fellow, Hoover Institution



Last fall San Franciscans voted on whether to provide benefits for the unmarried lovers of city employees, including homosexuals. To the horror of the gay-rights establishment, the referendum narrowly lost. The margin almost certainly came from the "no" votes of Asian-American and Mexican-American immigrants.

Opponents of mass immigration may have the wrong answer, but they ask the right question. Do immigrants further poison our already sick culture? If so we should keep them out, no matter how much they may help our economy. But if they bring antidotes to our homegrown decadence, we should welcome them.

Consider the attack on the family—perhaps the gravest current threat to our heritage, backed by most of the Fortune 500 as well as the media and government. Who provides more recruits to feminism: Latin and Confucian newcomers, or native suburbanites? Who signs up for the National Organization of Women, who demands value-free sex education and round-the-clock daycare centers?

Vietnamese-American students rebuke their classmates for their rudeness to teachers. Refugees from Afghanistan refuse to enroll their children in coed gym classes. Mexican-Americans stubbornly honor Our Lady of Guadalupe, not Frosty the Snowman. We need more such citizens, not fewer.

The strongest point against immigrants is that they are strangers to the Anglo-American constitutional tradition. True, this tradition cannot be learned overnight—but it doesn't have to be. First-generation immigrants are too busy for politics; what counts is their children and grandchildren, up for grabs like everyone else in our untidy ideological marketplace. Over time, South European ethnics such as Antonin Scalia may do as much to restore our Constitution as the WASP Abraham Lincoln or the Scandinavian Earl Warren did to destroy it.

It is the converts to a tradition who bring the most imagination and vigor to its defense. Consider the Disraeli family. Consider the post-World War II conservative revival in America, the leadership of which came disproportionately from Catholic immigrant stock. If my fellow WASPs had remained in charge as in the 1930's, we would probably never have stopped losing.

A tradition especially needs newcomers to stir things up when it is so decayed that the challenge is not to conserve but to restore. The works of immigrant scholars such as Eric Voegelin or Leo Strauss may be flawed, but our universities would be even more impoverished without them. Voegelin and Strauss, of course, are far removed from the streets of Spanish Harlem. Visits to such places make me wonder whether their residents will ever be "citizens" in any sense recognizable to James Madison. But I recall that my ancestors had similar worries about another swarm of Latin newcomers: the Italians.

The arguments against Hispanic immigration today seemed just as plausible against Italians around 1900. Most Italian-Americans came not from the region of Dante but from the backward, anti-republican south. They were more likely than any other immigrants of that era to stay here only temporarily: in some years as many as seven returned to Italy for every ten who arrived in America. They hated formal education, and did their best to avoid not only our secular public schools but our Irish-controlled Catholic schools. Italian-Americans scored as low on IQ tests then as blacks do today. Their average family income was even lower than the blacks'—at the height of Jim Crow. Many of our grandparents thought that they must be innately inferior. Irish-American priests were known to call them "dagoes" in public; one said that "Italians are not a sensitive people like our own."

But these "inferior" newcomers were to move into the mainstream with dizzying speed, partly because they concentrated on work, not politics. They often provided valuable services as strikebreakers. Doubts about their national loyalties proved groundless; in 1943 Italian-American soldiers enthusiastically invaded their ancestral homeland. By the 1960's, Italian-Americans had larger family incomes than WASPs or German-Americans.

Once they did get involved in politics, Italian-Americans resisted welfare-state bribery and ethnic-bloc voting. For decades, Republican politics in parts of New York and Connecticut has largely been a contest between liberal WASPs and conservative Italians. In 1984 Geraldine Ferraro

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was rejected not only by New Yorkers, by Italians, by Catholics, and by women—but even by New York Italian Catholic women.

More important than politics, of course, is music. Deep-South WASPs have given us rock, the blacks' revenge for slavery. Italian-Americans have given us Caruso and Toscanini.

Like the Italians, today's Hispanic immigrants are selective about which features of modern American culture to absorb. A surprisingly large number of them manage to send their children to private schools, rejecting both the anti-religious conformism and the linguistic separatism of the public schools. Bilingual education is almost entirely a public-school phenomenon—not a response to market-place demand, but to court rulings and regulations written by our decadent native establishment. Under a voucher system it would vanish.

Today's boisterous Hispanic adventurers remind me of the 18th-century Scots-Irish immigrants who bypassed the WASP tidewater for the frontier. The tax revolts and anti-euthanasia protests of the 21st century will need them. ◈

DANIEL A. STEIN
Executive Director, Federation for American Immigration Reform

There are very few universal truths in life, but one of them is "There is nothing so permanent as a temporary change."

New York City, for example, instituted its rent control policies to avoid placing undo hardships on the families of our boys who were off fighting World War II. Those same laws are still on the books in 1990, and thousands of New Yorkers are still paying the same rent they were paying in 1940.

After the brutal crackdown against the Solidarity freedom movement in Poland in 1981, the United States granted Extended Voluntary Departure (EVD) to thousands of Poles in this country—"just until conditions improved in that country." Solidarity now runs Poland, democracy is on the march in Eastern Europe, and the Poles we allowed to stay "just until things improved" are staying in droves. Nor will they be asked to return home. The people we permitted to live here temporarily have now established roots in their communities, we are told, and it would be unfair to ask them to leave.

For the past six years a similar bill has been floating around Congress to grant EVD to more than one million Salvadorans and Nicaraguans who are illegally in the United States—of course, "just until things improve down there." The most recent incarnation of the bill passed the House last fall and is due to be voted on in the Senate this spring.

Despite the fact that things have already improved in those countries, the bill's sponsors, Congressman Joe Moakley (D-MA) and Senator Dennis DeConcini (D-AZ) are still pushing this piece of legislation as hard as ever. Last year's democratic elections in El Salvador and the dramatic results of the February 25 elections in Nicaragua haven't convinced the bill's supporters that EVD is a bad idea whose time has passed. Reality has simply sent them scurrying for new and creative reasons for not enforcing laws against illegal immigration.

Whereas just a few months ago EVD was being sold as a humanitarian insurance policy for people who lived in countries with repressive governments or civil war, we are now being told that more than a million illegal aliens should be allowed to remain here for economic reasons. That, of course, is precisely why the overwhelming majority of Salvadorans and Nicaraguans came here in the first place. It is the reason virtually *every* illegal alien comes to the United States.

U.S. refugee law is very specific about what constitutes a legitimate refugee: a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, ethnicity, or political belief. The law is very clear that poverty alone is not sufficient reason for coming here, or being permitted to remain, either temporarily or permanently.

The proponents of EVD now claim that these illegal aliens should be allowed to remain "temporarily" because sending them back at this time would cause economic hardship not just for the aliens, but for their countries as well. It is a strange reversal of roles: the same people who for years have been insisting that Salvadorans and Nicaraguans were legitimate political refugees, not economic migrants, are now asking that they be allowed to stay in the United States for economic reasons. It's a safe bet that if and when there is some economic improvement in those countries, these same advocates will argue that we can't ask these "temporary" residents to leave because they have now established roots in this country.

As the economic and military superpower of this hemisphere, the United States has an important role to play in helping these emerging democracies succeed. However, we cannot absorb Latin America's excess population. As the proponents of EVD now admit, the forces driving Latin Americans to the United States are economic, not political. These problems are not limited to El Salvador and Nicaragua—they are endemic to the entire region. To accommodate their exploding populations, the nations to our south will have to create 52 million new jobs over the next thirty years, and do it from an economic base one-fifth that of the United States.

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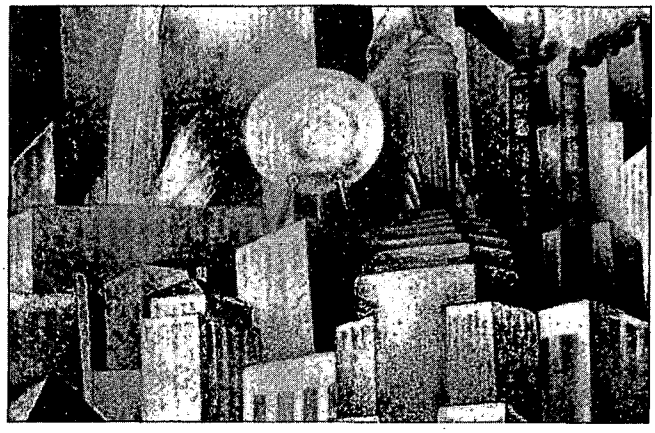
Granting EVD to Salvadorans and Nicaraguans on the basis of economic hardship would be an extremely dangerous precedent given the economic and demographic projections for the Third World. Calling such a measure "temporary" stretches cynicism even beyond normal congressional standards. If we grant these people "temporary" legal status, we can count on them going home around the same time New Yorkers with rent-controlled apartments start paying fair-market rents. ◈

DONALD DEVINE
President, Donald Devine Company, Management Consultants



The argument against mass immigration is that the admission of non-Anglo entrants into the United States will eventually undermine its culture. The fact that this argument makes a good deal of intuitive sense means that it cannot be dismissed by a simple appeal to emotion. I must admit my first reaction was that this Irishman would not be here today if the argument's implications were enforced earlier in history; but, clearly, that is not a sufficient response.

The more scientific way is to test the assumption of the argument: what has the admission of non-Anglos done to the culture? Almost two decades ago, I wrote a book—*The Political Culture of the United States*—that investigated the viability of that culture. Both the more impressionistic evidence and the empirical data yielded the conclusion that the culture has been maintained relatively intact over time and that mass immigration has not undermined the value consensus originally developed from English (not "British," a relatively recent artifice) roots.

Culture was defined as the determining set of beliefs and institutions for a nation, and the American core values were identified as: national identity/patriotism, trust in neighbor, love of family, liberty, moral equality before the law, property, achievement, belief in God, religion, altruism, parliamentary rule, and decentralized politics—all basically derived from English culture during the colonial period. To these, the Founders only had to add federalism, a formal separation of powers and democratic elections.

Political Culture analyzed all public opinion polls taken between the birth of polling in 1935 and 1970 and concluded that Americans, across all population subgroupings, had supported the values of the culture throughout this period. Using earlier, less empirical sources back to Tocqueville led to the same conclusion. The poll data were retested (somewhat less rigorously) in 1976, 1982, and 1990 with similar results.

Clearly, there are many problems in measuring support for culture from polls. Yet the fact that Americans from many different backgrounds give at least verbal approval to these values over this long period of time demonstrates some continuing level of cultural support. To be sure, there are some differences among groups in support for these values, but the fact that, generally, all major groups give wide approval to them all gives even stronger confirmation.

Some values did register lower levels of support over time. The ideal number of children in the home dropped, and the acceptability of divorce increased. But even here, the ideal median has gone down from three children to two, and the divorce rate has stabilized since 1980. Plus, the decline itself has not come primarily from among immigrants—indeed, quite the reverse.

While there are lower levels of support from ethnic groups on some values, these same groups tend to have higher support for some of the other values in our culture. For example, African-Americans give significantly lower levels of support for property and (some of the) family values, but give higher support to religion. Hispanics register lower in support for liberty, but much higher in support of the family. Among those competing values it is difficult to say which are the more important. F.A. Hayek, for example, gives roughly equal status to the need in a free society for a religious moral code, strong families, and support for property.

Interestingly, when the relatively lower support for certain values by some ethnic groups is compared to levels in other nations—as measured by a National Opinion Research Center 1987 poll of seven nations—American minority groups are much more supportive of even private property than the center of Anglo culture itself, Great Britain, to say nothing about Ireland and most of the other nations.

The available data simply do not give reason for concern about declining American values as a result of mass immigration. Yes, there should be concern about the decline of the family, and perhaps about a weaker commitment to some of the other values mentioned above, but the decline seems more related to wider social problems—such as a welfare policy that undermines the family, and schools that do not teach values—rather than to problems resulting from immigration.

A good argument can be made for the proposition that immigrants are more supportive of traditional American values than most groups in the population, including especially the cultural and political elite. There is no evidence for concern about Hispanic immigration. The fact that Latin American countries do not work is much more plausibly the result of their institutions than their values. It may be miraculous that any immigrant group supports American values, given the virtual onslaught against them by the media, but in fact they do. How long they will continue to do so without a better defense of the culture by

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its supporters is a good question.

All the data suggest that culture is resistant to change. A system of belief like ours, with a strong element of cross-culturally attractive values, is probably even more impervious to change. Obviously, there is some limit to a culture's ability to absorb new immigrants, and some numerical limits each year would be prudent. Yet the present limit could probably be doubled before we would approach that saturation point.

If American culture has forced us Irish to admire English values and to support political institutions derived from them—we who have been at war with the English for millennia—why should one despair of others being absorbed by that culture? We Irish, like other Americans, support this culture—yes, because it is ours, but primarily because it is fair, right, and it works. Just do not remind us too often that its origins are English, and we all just may be able to mount the defense of the culture so necessary to a future of peace and freedom.

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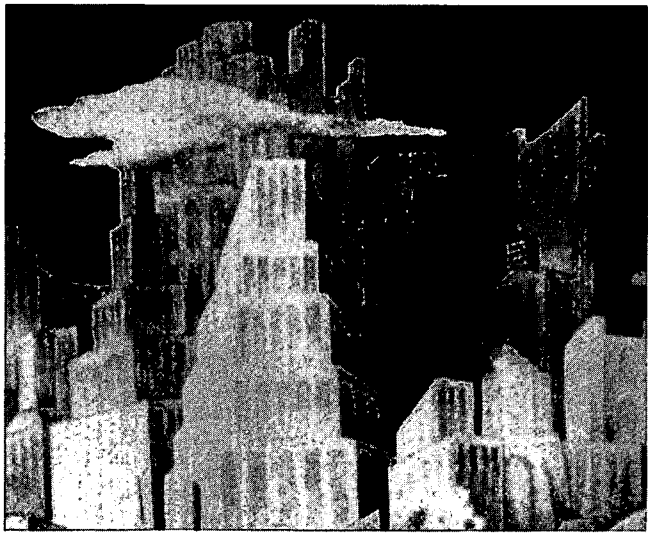

America, I suggest, stands at a crossroads on the immigration question. We can either continue to bring into America a mass of low-skilled immigrants or we can reach down to train and employ our own poor. But we cannot do both, and shall have to decide.

I do not think it is even a close question. The underclass in America is a growing, metastasizing cancer. We are experiencing an epidemic of teenage pregnancy, joblessness, drug use, crime—we all know the litany. Our urban streets have become battlefields, our ghettos breeding grounds of discontent. This is a nation-threatening problem, and it will either be solved or it will get much worse.

It is my experience that it will not be solved without a massive effort on the part of America to reach down and train and employ our own poor. It will not be easy. Many of our poor are very dysfunctional and will need lots of help. But they are our fellow citizens and our destinies are intertwined. If we don't solve this problem, and solve it soon, there will hardly be a livable city in our nation. To say that a large number of frustrated, disaffected, untrained, unemployed, and increasingly violent citizens can be ignored is like saying "your end of the boat is sinking."

America presently can too easily get its labor force from legal and illegal immigrants. This is not an irrational act: immigrants are hard workers and often work for low wages and no benefits. Illegal immigrants will come to America and live in appalling conditions, accept payment in cash, do without any benefits and, if they complain, an employer can turn them in to the Immigration Service. It is a functional source of labor to many Americans.

But it is too often dysfunctional to America. What America does *not* need in the 1990's is ten million unskilled immigrants to move in and take our low-skill jobs. America should turn from the Cold War to a domestic crusade to solve our problem of the dysfunctional poor. We must start our own poor up the ladder of success, and thus a tight labor market is needed. A tight labor market is the best friend to the poor because it forces society to train and employ its own unemployed. Labor projections show a *decline* in the number of low-skill and blue-collar jobs that have started other generations on the road to success. Whenever these jobs are available, they should be for our own unemployed.

Our nation does not lack people to fill our jobs: we lack trained and hardworking people. I don't mean to minimize the effort that American society and particularly American business will have to make to rely more on our own poor. It is both frustrating and costly to train and employ our own unskilled labor. A myriad of problems will be encountered. But it can be done. Virtually every one of our economic competitors runs their economy without immigrants. They solve their labor needs domestically and run economies that recently have been performing better than our own.

What can be done? Plenty.

First, we can start to pick immigrants for their skills. I don't suggest we stop immigration. Instead, we should pick our immigrants not for what we can do for them, but for what they can do for *us*. Every other immigrant-accepting nation has a point system that emphasizes the skills of immigrants.

Second, we must change the laudable but unrealistic national attitude that we can be the home of last resort to all the world's poor. We can't. We must choose among many worthy people and, as long as we can't accept everyone, why not accept the highest skilled?

Third, we can vigorously enforce employer sanctions and stop illegal immigration.

Most importantly, we can turn our national resolve to training, educating, and employing our own poor. There should not be a child in America needing Head Start for whom it is not available. We should put our best and most motivating teachers into our poorest schools, even if we have to double their salaries. We must train and retrain—but most important we must reserve our own jobs for our own poor.

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Still the Colonies

by Katherine Dalton

Since the days when Tom Paine set himself up as chief propagandist for the emerging American colonies the United States has been subject to invasion by British journalists. They come for a variety of reasons. Tired of tax collecting in England, Tom Paine came to start anew, and if doing so involved the common sense of opposing English taxes, that is just one of history's little ironies. The late Henry Fairlie, who had made his home at the *New Republic* until his death in February, came here in 1965 because after calling Antonia Fraser a name over British radio, he found he could not pay the damages assessed against him when she won her case for libel. Christopher Hitchens, *Harper's* Washington editor and columnist for the *Nation*, says he came here because the U.S. is "immense and varied and important." Tom Bethell of the *American Spectator* came here in 1962 because, he says, "I liked jazz."

Whatever their past in England, they often do very well in America. People like S.I. Newhouse seem to hire nothing but Brits, installing Tina Brown at *Vanity Fair*, her husband, Harold Evans, at *Condé Nast Traveler*, and sending Anna Wintour from American *Vogue* to British *Vogue* to *House & Garden* back to replace Grace Mirabella at American *Vogue*. When William F. Buckley, Jr. needed someone to head up his *National Review*, he went after an English Catholic, not an American one, hiring John O'Sullivan, late of the London *Telegraph* and London *Times*. Englishman John Evans established himself at the *Village Voice* years ago and was for several more years president of Murdoch Magazines in America before getting promoted up. Anthony Hayden-Guest still haunts New York and has proved so enduring a character that Tom Wolfe drew freely from him for Peter Fallow in *Bonfire of the Vanities*. Even MTV had to go all the way to London to find a girl with just the right combination of servility, vulgarity, and rhythm to become its star veejay.

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We are as we have always been, ripe for colonization by the British press. One of the big moments in American journalism, the New York *Herald*'s discovery of David Livingston, recovering on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, was engineered by Henry Morton Stanley, né John Rowlands in Wales. (Who ever heard of an American, even in the last century, saying "I presume"?) The *Herald*'s founder, John Gordon Bennett, came from Scotland to New York to start the paper in 1835. As for the two best-known foreign gadflies of American government and society at the moment, Englishman Christopher Hitchens and Irishman Alexander Cockburn, in hiring them as columnists the *Nation* is only holding true to the tradition of its founder, Edwin Lawrence Godkin, an Irishman who imported himself to America in 1856.

As the biographies of some of these above-mentioned gentlemen show, the British import is not always the most attractive character. For many of them the prototype seems to be Corker in *Scoop*, or Wolfe's Peter Fallow. (For Cockburn the relationship to Waugh is more than incidental: Waugh was his cousin.) The stories about Henry Fairlie are legion, and involve wine, women, setting one host's house to smoldering and a trek by trailer across the country to find America. One of Anthony Hayden-Guest's nicknames in New York is "Unwelcome," and *Spy* magazine is forever twitting him about wine, women, and his inability to pick up the tab. For these men America can be very convenient, and their easy usage is not limited to this century. William Cobbett came to live in America for three periods in his life: once as a soldier, and twice (in 1792 and 1817) when he feared prosecution in England for sedition. He liked life on Long Island, and he did not miss the Gagging Acts (or his creditors), but "I myself," he wrote in 1818, "am bound to England for life."

Men like Henry Morton Stanley are the 19th-century paradigm for the wandering British academic of today, who teaches at Oxford for half the year for prestige, and at

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Syracuse or Berkeley the other half for money. The only differences now are that travel is easier, and America's Anglophilia and lenient hiring laws make a profession of allegiance unnecessary. Neither Christopher Hitchens nor Alexander Cockburn seems to have any intention of becoming a citizen, although the former has been here since 1981, the latter since 1972, and neither plans to leave. "I got my green card quickly," says Mr. Hitchens. "Besides, I was 30 when I got here and I'd feel like an imposter saying I was an American; it's too late to change. We are too similar and too distinct. There are Irish-Americans and German-Americans and Mexican-Americans—but there is no such thing as an English-American."

Some of this reticence to really attach may be explained by this quote from Jessica Mitford. She was writing about the South (for a 1962 magazine article), but her comparison is to Anglo-American relations:

> The prejudice Northerners feel towards Southerners is roughly parallel to that felt by English people toward Americans, and is compounded of many of the same ingredients—a thoroughgoing dislike of their public policies, contempt for their level of education and culture, and a sort of instinctive recoil at the sound of the accent—larded in both cases, it must be said, with a thick layer of that particular form of snobbishness that sneers at the provincial.

It's a telling quote, not the less so because Miss Mitford has lived here most of her life, married an American, became a citizen, and seems genuinely to like the country (her years in the Communist Party notwithstanding).

The British wouldn't be here, of course, if Americans hadn't hired them, and the question then is what makes them so attractive? The answer is not as simple as American insecurity, though there is certainly some lingering colonial timidity that sends a wave of panic through an upwardly-mobile middle-class American—am I using the right fork?—whenever some Mother Country accent comes floating down the dinner table. No one is so foolish to think that Mrs. Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans* would have been a hit had the author been from Boston. Nor is there any question that when the British aren't being purposefully rude—the English definition of a gentleman—their manners are indeed more gracious than ours.

In mores as in journalism, part of the answer to the question of British success in America is style. The British often write well, or at least better than most American journalists—even Christopher Hitchens' enemies praise his English. Plus an Oxbridge education still counts for more than Harvard or Stanford or Yale. One American professor explained the prevalence of British academics in American classics departments by saying that we can forgive them their high standards: coming from their still class-stratified country, they are exempt from the egalitarian rule. Excellence in some fellow-citizen is quite another matter. *Veni, vidi, vici* does not apply to those who *venierunt* from, say, Sandusky, Ohio.

Brits are also especially welcome on the left, because by virtue of their foreignness and their accent and their politics, they remain very much outsiders and hence "unmeltable." Besides, the left prefers its criticism to be truculent, and the bloodiest soldiering has always been done by mercenaries; not because they are paid to fight, but because what should they care how they wage battle, when it's not their people or their country?

Like many vices this British bluntness can sometimes be a virtue; for better and worse still another reason to hire a Briton is he can say things an American can't. This is partly because he is an outsider, but partly due to the freer debate you will find not only in England but all over Europe. England's official secrets act is nothing compared to the American horror of speaking one's mind, of purposefully giving offense, of making an enemy. As a nation we may lack manners, but not tact. The British, however, don't have to play the code-word games you'll see in American discussions of, for example, poverty ("inner-city youth"), they don't have to restrict themselves from certain topics, they don't even have to be polite. Sometimes it seems that they don't even *like* to be polite. If anything they possess as a group a decided affinity for the *ad hominen* attack.

One of the arguments against opening the borders is that immigrants have a habit of bringing along their own cliques, own prejudices, and own quarrels. This is as true of the British as it is of the Columbians or Montenegrins, though the British are generally more entertaining. Frankly, the best thing about Mr. Cockburn especially is his quarrels. His prose *in medias pugnas* takes on a life that the endless Nicaragua columns lack. The swipes at Colonel North and President Reagan and Mrs. Kirkpatrick are pale by comparison, merely the rote public hate for impersonal public enemies. The good stuff is saved for private targets—who of course are most often British. As the feminist adage has it, the personal is political.

There's a book to be written on Hitchens-Cockburn-Fairlie feuds alone. Take, for example, the only two-*Nation*-page column of Christopher Hitchens that I can recall—he generally limits himself to a single *Nation* page—which was a personal attack in the form of a review of Englishman Paul Johnson's *Intellectuals*. (It's the same with all of us: some things we write for hire, and some for pleasure.) It begins: "In a novel called *Left of Centre* which is now, to the relief of its publisher and author alike, safely out of print, Paul Johnson wrote what is generally agreed to be the most embarrassing spanking scene ever penned" and descends from there, drinking and wife-slapping figuring prominently.

More tasteful but just as fierce was the inter-magazine war in 1987-88 between Henry Fairlie (*New Republic*) and Alexander Cockburn (*Nation*) over an alleged slur by Mr. Fairlie against Mr. Cockburn's father, Claud Cockburn, the famous leftist journalist. Fairlie wrote in the *New Republic* that Claud had fabricated his London *Times* reports from New York during the Great Crash. For a regular journalist this would be a serious charge. But Claud Cockburn is famous for founding *The Week*, a pro-Soviet newsletter that even the more polite admit published "near-rumor," once acted as *Pravda*'s London correspondent, and happily admitted in his autobiography, *I, Claud*, that he and Otto Katz invented the Battle of Tetuan when they were

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reporting on the Spanish Civil War in the 30's for the *Daily Worker*. Indeed, as Alexander Cockburn remarked, Claud was proud of his proper Communist ethic of putting party first.

But with regard to Fairlie's charge, his corresponding failure to produce any hard evidence was just so much grist for the mill of Claud Cockburn's son:

> For Fairlie one should, I suppose, nourish the emotions that Aristotle thought to be evoked by tragedy: pity for a broken man, evicted from his lodgings, compelled to the hospice of *The New Republic*, dependent on the charity of [editor Martin] Peretz, degraded in his intellectual standards so much so that he is, on some accounts, writing speeches for Senator Al Gore, the candidate most esteemed by Peretz, trembling daily at the thought that next Peretz will command him to join Tipper Gore in some ceremonial bonfire of records from Prince and Motley Crüe; fear that some kindred ghastly misfortune will one day befall oneself.

This gives you, in case you are unfamiliar with Cockburn, a good indication of why people like to read him. Celt that he is, he is most terrible in his pity.

All this is highly entertaining, and it is for their entertainment value that the British are often so popular. But this clowning around can both make a Briton's career and break it. Christopher Hitchens has made a name for himself, and a good living, writing for his various outlets in England and America, but relative fame is not the same as influence. Has he made anybody—except Paul Johnson perhaps, but let's say anybody American—really mad, which is for a journalist the sure sign of doing your job? The answer is "sort of": there have been yelps from the *New Republic*, whose parties he likes to crash, and from David Horowitz, whose "Second Thoughts" conferences he likes to crash, and Bob Tyrrell of the *American Spectator* likes to call him "Christabel." Also he recently infuriated the pro-abortion left, which is to say almost all of the left, with a column last April in which he came out of his pro-life closet. But with that one exception, outside of his fellow-journalists he seems to elicit little real irritation. And that means, despite his position as Washington editor of *Harper's*, that in this country at least he is out of the debate. (The answer, clearly, is Hitchens needs to turn to the right.)

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It is for their entertainment value that the British are often so popular.

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Alexander Cockburn has the same problem, though he has had more luck making enemies, and his columns in the *Wall Street Journal* are a perfect illustration of why. When he is not preaching to the converted (in the *Nation*) he is preaching to the unconvertible. Like his forebear Sir George Cockburn (War of 1812), he has taken it upon himself to torch Washington, but with less success.

There are some exceptions to this rule: John O'Sullivan at *National Review*, Peter Brimelow at *Forbes*, Tom Bethell, too. It may not be coincidental that their politics are conservative; for all its many faults the right defines itself with the country, not in opposition to it, and as John Baden keeps saying of the environmental movement, people have to believe you care before they'll bother listening to you. Mr. Cockburn has convinced people of his love for American tail-fin cars, but not of his love for much American else.

Perhaps because they are less opposed to the U.S. politically, O'Sullivan, Brimelow, and Bethell have also attuned themselves more finely to the American political idiom—as did Henry Fairlie: for all his bemoaned drift leftwards, he could write with an at least Americanized viewpoint. There is too much of the Old Country language of trade unions and class warfare in Hitchens and Cockburn (though I think Hitchens is learning)—the packaging is wrong, and it also has marginalized them. In this country the zealot interested in real change will sugarcoat his radical proposals in moderate, or at least more modern terms; in such a way do the Ins and Outs in Washington work towards a "consensus."

This is not to say that Hitchens and Cockburn have not been successful, because they have. They may also have come to America because here they could find a success they could not find at home. Tom Paine (Christopher Hitchens' hero, by the way) is once again archetypal: a staysmaker and fired tax-collector who had got himself into debt, he came armed with only a recommendation from Benjamin Franklin to start over in the New World, and wrote himself a place in the American founding myth. Alexander Cockburn did not have much of a reputation in England before he crossed the Atlantic, where he has done by any standards very well. Perhaps it has been helpful to him that in a country that cannot seem to produce or promote its own irreverent political comedians, a country whose own journalists don't seem to know enough to be able to crib even the odd apocryphal Anacharsis quote, he has had less competition. There is no question, as Mr. Hitchens says frankly, that it is easier to freelance here, that the grass is greener. That being so, both he and the unapologetic Soviet apologist Mr. Cockburn have shown themselves to be—like so many leftists—good entrepreneurs who are banking on capitalism.

If there is any irony in this, it illustrates the final great besetting sin of British journalists (some): a tendency to sell out. Among the antibourgeois left the endless stories about public drunkenness and womanizing (leading my editor to complain that British journalists are "oversexed, overpaid, and over here") are perhaps less important—the offended values being bourgeois values, after all. But surely selling out the revolution is another matter.

A recent interview by Don Kowet of the *Washington Times* makes great use of Mr. Hitchens' $20,000 investment in the New York restaurant Indochine, where a typical dinner will cost your typical revolutionary $50, and of his white wine-quaffing during their conversation. Hitchens' preference for white wine by-the-glass with Mr. Kowet is perhaps indicative of the other side to Hitchens' and Cockburn's careers: a yuppie side. (Of this at least Tom Paine was innocent.) Mr. Hitchens is a contributing editor at

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Elle, and Mr. Cockburn has written a dozen articles for *House & Garden*, and somehow it just seems hilariously funny that the son of Red Claud would pen such sentences as:

> Those who love sweetbreads are doomed to constant disappointment and the ones at Maxim's proved to be no exception to this virtually invariable rule: a sweetbread is born to be braised, not encased in a shroud of bread crumbs and sauteed.

Or how about:

> Pity the poor *poisson* whose hour of fashionable glory has come. How can any *lotte* feel secure now that the word is out and the nets are down? As *lotte* or monkfish it now boldly graces restaurant tables.

Tell it to the people of Nicaragua, Alex. Less amusing of course are stories like Henry Morton Stanley's. After emigrating to New Orleans at age 16, Stanley became a naturalized citizen and took the name of his adoptive American father. During the Civil War he fought on both sides (for the South first, then of course for the North). Once his travels to find Livingstone and the source of the Nile made him justifiably famous, he returned to England in 1891 and renounced his American citizenship, becoming a subject of the Crown and a member of Parliament. This erstwhile Louisianian was knighted in 1899. All of which goes to show that while Stanley was a great man, he was not much of an American national. Or take Tom Paine—who as early as 1779, when American fortunes were very low, was talking to his friends about returning to the home he'd spent the last three years pilloring in ink. He wrote to Henry Laurens that "perhaps America would feel the less obligation to me did she know, that it was neither the place nor the people but the cause itself that irresistibly engaged me in its support, for I should have acted the same part in any other country could the same circumstances have arisen there which have happened here." Citizens of the world seem to have a harder time with more local attachments.

For some others who have hopscotched between Old World and New because they cannot leave the one and love the other, the trip over may have been more painful than profitable. No one can read Harold Evans' *Good Times, Bad Times* and believe the man can be satisfied with *Condé Nast Traveler*, however well his wife Tina Brown is doing at *Vanity Fair*. And one story about Timothy Dickinson, who came over here as a journalist in the early 70's but who has stayed to act as an encyclopedic source of data and quotations for people like George Will and Lewis Lapham, has it that he'll typically end a morning phone conversation with the remark that he must clear the line because he's expecting a call from England. There is no reason to doubt that he is; the point is he sounds like he's terribly homesick. If there is a certain amount of tension in the relations between British journalists and America, perhaps its root is in the simple fact that this isn't England, or Scotland, or Ireland, or Wales. But then the answer is as simple and direct as what British comedienne Tracey Ullman shouts to her American audience at the end of her Sunday night show: "Go home!" she says, "Go home!" ◁©▷

Systems of Mourning

by Tom Disch

The Irish hire keeners, the English mutes.
Some hobbyists will bronze the loved one's boots.

Revival theaters devote entire weeks
To proofs that Elvis Lives and Garbo Speaks.

Vikings consign their chieftains to the waves,
And Amy Clampitt visits famous graves.

Sorrowing bees return to ruined hives,
And Hindus burn their neighbors' grieving wives.

A dog will mourn his master like a serf
By pissing on the dear departed's turf.

Some weep in silence, others cry out loud,
And Susan Cheever sells her father's shroud.

In a Time of Plagues

Deer reck not of the hunting season.
  Sheep can't imagine shepherd's pie.
Smokers scorn the voice of reason.
  No one knows the day he'll die.

Gays there were who never heeded
  All the headlines about AIDS.
Drinkers drank, and still they speeded.
  Every color finally fades.

Power lines are thought to kill
  People who live too close by.
Look at your electric bill,
  Then think about the day you'll die.

No life's secure: oaks may defy
  Death for a century, but they,
Too, in the course of time must die.
  Timor mortis conturbat me.

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The Intransigent Uninvited

by Geoffrey Wagner

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Today the United States takes in annually more than twice as many immigrants as all other countries in the world put together. Many Asian countries permit no immigration at all, and openly despise foreigners. The top U.S.-immigrant exporter last year, Mexico (with 95,039), is also a vigorous deporter, sending back an average of 150 Central American illegals a month, for lack of or forged documentation.

But this is only the tip of the iceberg. Thanks to our generous laws granting citizenship to children born on U.S. soil, as well as spouses, there is a brisk run of "tourist" visits by pregnant foreigners coming to this country to have their babies (notably, now, from Hong Kong) and picking up an American passport for them before return. Thirty percent of marriages contracted by Filipinos in the U.S. are said to be fraudulent. Last year a Mexican being escorted back to the border gave birth to a boy in the back of an INS van. That boy is an American. Forty quarters of work and he qualifies for Social Security benefits.

Further, there is the flood of foreign students entering this country, making for a third of a million such here at any given moment. Of these China is far and away in the lead with 40,000, a total doubtless surpassed after recent events in that country. Given the F-1 student visa, easily adjustable for legal status, fewer than 10 percent of that number will return to China. Finally, the asylum loophole is being made annually more open and absurd, one such applicant claiming to be coming to America because his mother-in-law didn't like him, another because he lacked a TV set.

The organization called FAIR (Federation for American Immigration Reform), to whom I am indebted for most of these facts, is waging a war against the overcrowding of America that the environmentalists should be fighting, and is doing so with apparent popular support. Thus FAIR's recent poll on immigration attitudes in California found 94 percent of Hispanics in that state favoring increased border security, compared with 81 percent of voters overall; there was strong support for the four-mile ditch south of San Diego, a border stiffening that would be, for the *New York Times*, "divisive to Mexican-American relations." In Florida the *Miami Herald* seems to take a routinely left-liberal stance on most issues *except* those involving Cuban (and now Nicaraguan) immigration into the state, with consequent pressures on hospitals, schools, etc.

The first thing the illegal does in crossing the border is to break the law of the land he wishes to reside in. If lucky, he may then find our government conniving in his action by calling him, *pace* the Carter administration, an undocumented alien, a term irritating to a legal immigrant like myself with its suggestion of a few papers mislaid along the route; by the same token, if I had married three women and got away with it, I would be an undocumented bigamist. And apparently there are quite a few undocumented murderers at large. (Out of the 22,000 murders in the United States annually more than 5,000 are "cold cases," i.e., unsolved.)

Then the State Department's visa lottery, filing millions of applications from countries unrepresented in the U.S. and causing the mobbing of American embassies, was another distasteful cheapening of the oath of allegiance, turning the process of naturalization into a matter of *If you've got it I'm entitled to it*. Far more than Switzerland, America is held up to the world as the lucky-lotto country. Finally, the illegal is amnestied, to the extent of three million by the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, a figure which does not take into account the

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Geoffrey Wagner's latest book was Red Calypso *(Regnery Gateway), a study of Cuban adventurism in the ex-British Caribbean.*

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follow-up of families. In the 1990 census illegal aliens will be counted for the purpose of apportioning seats in Congress. *Verb. sap.* In the words of Congressman Lamar Smith (R-TX), "Unprincipled generosity lacks value."

I came to America under the old McCarran-Walter Act on a Liberty transport called the *Marine Tiger* (hammock-hold accommodation, a £25 ride). On my quota visa I had to serve a five-year probationary period during which I had regularly to report my address, be fingerprinted in a Precinct House, clear my taxes and obtain a Re-Entry permit each time I left the U.S.A., and not return to my country of origin for any extended period—this to discourage people treating citizenship like a driving license (a passport is no guarantee of patriotism). I then had to make a Declaration of Intention within two more years, appear with witnesses and be examined in English and what is today called "civics" (now opposed as irrelevant by civil libertarian groups). I then took the oath in a moving ceremony. I cannot say I found these requirements onerous. They were much less so than for French citizenship, and INS officials were unfailingly courteous.

The McCarran-Walter Act was considered repressive since it allotted quotas to countries. England's was the largest, on the basis of its being the parent country, and it was never filled, while postwar Italians had to wait in line for years for a quota visa. I simply walked across Grosvenor Square to the only embassy the U.S. doesn't own freehold (it belongs to the Duke of Westminster), was medically examined, and filled in some papers. I had no idea what to write in the box for race, was told to put Caucasian, and felt rather grand. The quotas were not intentionally racist; they were based on the U.S. population as a whole where and as possible (immigration of American Indians obviously was not).

Now it is assumed that quotas are automatically evil, and perhaps they are in certain areas, such as employment and education. Immigration quotas, however, were designed to preserve the unifying ideal of American society, as popularly discerned. The "huddled masses" woman, Emma Lazarus, who gave so much impetus to the melting-pot notion, was an indifferent poetess, not an elected official, as were both McCarran and Walter. By now it is quite clear that the introduction of hundreds of subgroups, with specific claims far in excess of their numbers, fractures the basic coherence of society, as the language problem has shown. Bilingual education and civic signs in various tongues really say that your culture is better than ours. For where loyalty is concerned it is difficult to be patriotic to a multiculture, and the culture of origin becomes dominant. Take the case of England, my own country of origin.

British society was founded *pari passu* by people with white skins. It was hardly England's fault that she was settled by Saxons, Normans, Icelandic traders and the like, all of whom pushed back the Celtic fringe of Europe. She was enslaved under the Roman Empire, her queen, Boadicea, killing herself after the indignity of being publicly scourged, a fact that has never persuaded me to boycott Italian restaurants. There was no significant immigration into England by either blacks or Asiatics until after the Second World War and, in particular, the 1960's. No Labour politician dared stem the influx, preferring to spend the time of day opposing the playing of Elgar's *Land of Hope and Glory* and the like. Today England is so attractive for settlement-immigration that a third of such visas goes to the Indian Subcontinent, and the larger part of that to Pakistan, which exports immigrants with by far the highest birthrate of any alien group in England (well beyond even the West Indians). As a result of beneficent laxity in legislation, then, England seems headed for the imposition of color quotas.

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In 1986 the U.S. government paid more than $17 million in Social Security benefits to illegal aliens.

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Last year the U.S. took in one-tenth of one percent of the entire population of Mexico, which was, incidentally, the first country in the Western hemisphere to recognize the Bolsheviks (in 1924) and which sheltered Castro and assisted the Ortegas, as well as being the only OAS member to decline to break ties with Cuba in 1964. In the same year the U.S. admitted under a hundred Irish. Immigration quotas into America are called racist although Asian countries like Japan discourage immigration, while Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines all carry quota systems on their books eliminating or restricting Chinese immigration. So McCarran-Walter stands accused under a neologism called "nativism" of trying to preserve, not only the natural beauty of America from overpopulation, but also a cultural mix that has been the patrimony of America for generations. The Balkanizing or splintering of this mix on behalf of increasing numbers of special needs is crucially divisive of the general coherence of our society.

As an ex-limey I am not advocating an excessive number of British immigrants. On the contrary, it is worth noting that in his *Emigration and Disenchantment: Portraits of Englishmen Repatriated from the United States* Wilbur S. Shepperson suggests that we British have been the worst immigrants to America in the sense that a large proportion decline to take up the Declaration of Intention and return home (especially true of the Scots). It does not surprise me. Half a century ago an Englishman coming to America heard roughly the same tongue and was put off by not finding a closer approximation to his own culture. Semantics are at the heart of upper-class British anti-Americanism even today, for variation in language comes over, at first, as error. A different language is another matter. Changing his tongue, a Greek or Pole invests more psychological capital in the new land and will assimilate better, in the sense of assenting to and supporting national ideals. To such we provoke disloyalty by financing departures from the language and customs of the host community; for instance, in England today, despite the illegality of brutal halal slaughtering, schools with Moslem pupils have been cowed into sponsoring such meat in their dinners. Far from enriching the national body with fresh currents of plurality, we are publicly financing national disintegration. After all, it is calculated that by the end of the century nearly one-third of

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all school-age children in America will be from minority populations. Amnesty of illegals is now to include their families; such may "run to a million," according to INS spokesman Duke Austin, spouses and children becoming eligible for welfare permits.

The irony is that while America is opening its borders to multi-ethnicity, Europe is closing its (Italy even evolving a McCarran-Walter quota system of its own). With the abolition of frontiers pan-Europe sees the spectacle of floating work forces (Vietnamese, Sri Lankan, Zairian, whatever) moving freely from country to country and displacing indigenous workers. Sri Lankan Tamils have already violently resisted deportation at London's Heathrow Airport, even stripping off their trousers in protest. It is by no means alarmist to see networks of smugglers and forgers entering eventual pan-Europe as tourists when documentation, already minimal, will be nonexistent.

So when the Senate passed a measure that would exclude illegal aliens from Social Security and disability payments, liberals called it "punitive" and the ACLU "unfair," although Idi Amin was allowed to get away with expelling 26,000 Asians. Unfair, let us add, to those who should by rights be subject to deportation, and punitive to our exchequer—in 1986 the U.S. government paid more than $17 million in Social Security benefits to illegal aliens. Outside the law itself we find tax-levying bodies relaxing or breaking it, as when CUNY (City University of New York) granted reduced tuition for "undocumented" aliens. As one who taught within CUNY I can assure the reader that its humanitarian stance in this regard was commingled with a sneaking desire for survival. Its financial aid offices encourage as many students as possible, since without students the colleges would not exist. Bilingualism becomes a must under such circumstances, just to hold class.

And in the immigrant-rich states (New York, California, Florida) bilingualism is such that there will soon be no necessity for newcomers to this country to speak English at all. As for American history, the representative of an immigrant rights coalition has said, "It is nice to know who was the first President of the United States, but it's not necessary." With a third of Inner London now ethnic the British critic Russell Lewis depicts welfare-state immigration in words that could well be applied to America: "In post-Beveridge Britain we have tended more and more to think of membership of our democracy as a ticket, enabling the holder to join in a squalid scramble for benefits, instead of as a privilege, a share in a decent and just, even a great society." ◈

Womankind and Poesy: A Parable

by Tom Disch

"Because formal poetry has an obvious place in the male tradition, many contemporary feminist poets have rejected it completely, accused women of working in those traditions of buying into the patriarchy."
—from a review in *Open Places*

Cassandra stood outside the gate
Scarce able to express her hate
For traitors to their sex whose verse
Would rhyme or scan. On them her curse:
Should any woman ever write
As patriarchal acolyte
Let her sisters ever treat her
Strictly as her strictest meter,
Binding tight her tender feet
And beating her when she would cheat
By throwing in an anapest.
Then round about her swelling chest
Let constraining couplets wind
Till she cry out to Womankind:

O my dear sisters
forgive me if you can
I have been writing like a
patriarch
but now I've seen the error
of my ways
and by Gaea
I'm free!

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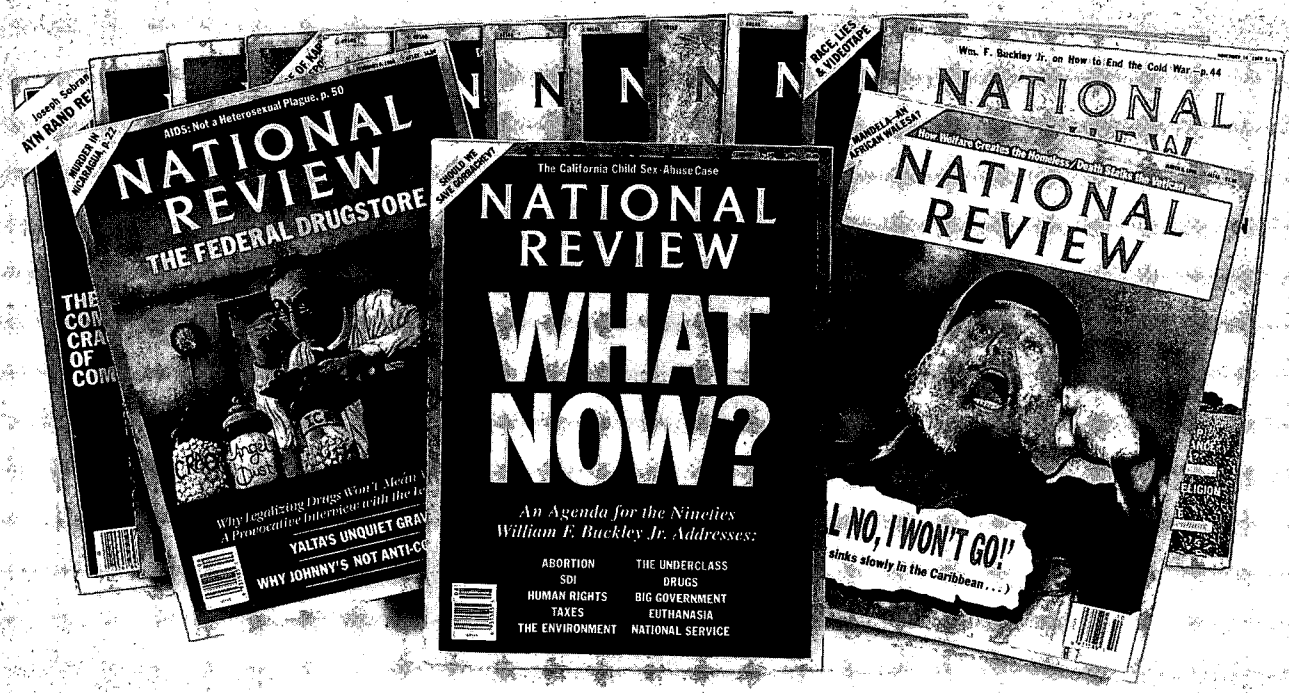

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Give Us Your Huddled Masses

by Donald Huddle

"Send these, the homeless, tempest tossed to me. . . ."
—Emma Lazarus

Friends or Strangers: The Impact of Immigrants on the U.S. Economy
by George J. Borjas
New York: Basic Books;
274 pp., $22.95

The Economic Consequences of Immigration
by Julian L. Simon
Cambridge: Basil Blackwell;
402 pp., $39.95

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The publication of a Julian Simon book is a cause for rejoicing among advocates of laissez-faire and open-border immigration. According to Dr. Simon, who teaches business administration at the University of Maryland and is an adjunct scholar at the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute, all immigrants and refugees, no matter how many or in what form, are good news for the American economy. His latest opus will not disappoint his followers, but it adds little of any substance to the real-world immigration policy debate.

The much smaller volume by University of California economist George Borjas is a valuable contribution to the debate on immigration—it is a penetrating, scholarly work incorporating state-of-the-art economic research and is very accessible to the noneconomist. In contrast to Simon's replay of the same old message, that the United States *"needs"* many more immigrants, Borjas finds that recent immigrants are much more likely to live below the poverty line, to be unskilled and unemployed, and to go on welfare. Borjas concludes that the United States must dramatically upgrade the quality of immigrants if we are to avoid the very large costs of the past fifteen to twenty years.

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

I begin with Simon's notions because they are both oversimplified and extreme. Those aspects of Simonism that are not contradicted by Simon himself are contradicted, for the most part, by Borjas later on.

Simon claims substantial scientific documentation to support his controversial thesis: increased immigration of at least one million a year is a "foolproof" way for the U.S. to advance every major national goal and ensure our economic success. Some of Simon's key contentions are that immigrants:

—work harder, save more, and are more innovative than are natives;

—do not displace native workers, not even unskilled minority workers;

—actually create new jobs on net balance by increasing the purchasing power of goods and services and by starting new businesses;

—use few welfare services and more than pay for those they do use in taxes;

—are typically as well-educated occupationally as natives: upon arrival immigrants earn less than natives, but within five years they catch up with and then earn more than native workers.

To Simon the popular belief—documented in opinion polls—that immigrants are harmful to the U.S. economy is the result of misinformation from the media. According to Simon, "cultural homogeneity" is just the contemporary code word for racist opposition to immigration. Those who differ with him are either badly informed or have a hidden special-interest political agenda.

Simon claims to be the first economist to "quantify" the costs and benefits of immigration because he has brought together a scientific approach and a solid economic-statistical basis for determining the social loss from keeping out nonwhite foreigners. The reader will be appalled to find that his analysis consists largely of pseudoscientific method, overstatement, hyperbole, and contradiction.

What then are Simon's so-called scientific and economic statistical bases that "prove" that immigrants, legal and illegal, bring untold economic benefits to American shores? The best way to illustrate Simon's methods and proofs is to offer several typical quotes from his work:

> Immigrants have a high propensity to start their own businesses; this seems obvious to the casual observer. For

Donald Huddle is a professor of economics at Rice University.

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> example, the proportion of taxi drivers (often self-employed) who have foreign accents seems high from New York to Melborne to Molmo, Sweden.
>
> There does not seem to exist a reliable study of immigrant business openings for the U.S. (though it is badly needed).

Simon uses a similar method in "proving" that immigrants save more, work harder, and are more innovative than natives:

> . . . regrettably this research has not yet been done. Therefore, I will be able to do no more than present some scraps of unrefined evidence from other countries' experience.

In effect, Simon offers absolutely no systematic evidence for the majority of his assertions. He is very critical throughout his book of his detractors who use anecdotal accounts and casual empiricism as evidence. But what is sauce for the goose is not sauce for the gander: for Simon himself freely uses newspaper accounts and anecdotes and engages in casual empiricism from cover to cover.

Simon also shows his inconsistency when he turns to the all-important question of whether immigrants displace native workers. He concludes that immigrants do not take jobs; they make jobs. Along the way, however, he cites a number of empirical studies that conclude that immigrants *do* displace native workers. For instance, he relies heavily on a study by Larry C. Morgan and Bruce L. Gardner (1982), which shows that the introduction of 210,000 Mexican *braceros* led to a fall in migrant farm labor wages of 9 percent as well as a reduction of 51,000 jobs previously held by natives. According to my simple math, this is a displacement rate of 24.3 percent. Yet Simon later concludes that "empirical studies reviewed in this chapter suggest that general immigration causes little or no unemployment."

The Urban Institute's study of Hispanicized urban labor markets in Los Angeles by Thomas Muller (1984) is also frequently cited by Simon as providing proof positive that immigrants are a windfall benefit. Muller seems to say that the very abundance of cheap Mexican and Central American labor helps retain low-standard, assembly-line industries in Los Angeles County, whereas otherwise, such industries (including clothing "sweat shops") could migrate abroad, presumably to Mexico's cut-rate border zone, to Taiwan, Korea, or Haiti. Thus, jobs are saved.

Yet Simon overlooks Muller's empirical findings that make a strong case against laissez-faire and open border immigration. True, low cost labor does subsidize the economy of L.A. County, but there are numerous adverse social effects. As Muller himself emphasized, Mexican-Americans and unskilled immigrants already in Southern California had to absorb much of the adverse impact, such as depressed wages and housing shortages.

Muller labeled the almost one million immigrants who settled in the L.A. metro area in the 1970's as a success story. But how about the one million other people who left the county in the meantime? Workers who were unwilling to accept lower wages tended to leave the region. Other people, who could not adjust to the spreading Third World immigrant subcultures and the "Hispanization" of public schools (where currently over 50 percent of the students are now of Mexican or Hispanic origin), left as part of the "white flight." Muller himself was seriously concerned about the future socioeconomic implications of the high dropout rate of school-age Hispanics of rural peasant background.

Simon has also claimed that immigrants pay more in taxes than they use in welfare services. He ignores refugees, each of whom costs the American taxpayer at least $7,000 per year. His rationale: refugees do not enter the U.S. under normal immigration quotas. Hence they are not immigrants. Even so, he is not able to empirically prove his case. The one extensive study he does depend on, by Gilberto Cardenas and Sidney Weintraub, is only for Texas data, and they ignore such large costs as food stamps, welfare outlays, and unemployment of displaced legal workers.

Borjas' major findings deal a death blow not only to Simon's claim that immigrants benefit the public coffers, but to nearly every one of Simon's major hypotheses. Borjas is able to show that the quality of recent immigrant waves to the United States has greatly deteriorated, with less schooling, weaker labor market attachment, higher unemployment rates, lower wage rates, higher poverty rates, and higher rates of welfare use than the waves that arrived in the 1950's and 60's. Nor have recent immigrants performed as well as natives in U.S. labor markets. Borjas finds that this decline in quality costs American society at

LIBERAL ARTS

WRONGFUL LIFE

Edward H. Winter probably would have died of a heart attack in May 1988, when he was 82, if a nurse at St. Francis-St. George Hospital in Cincinnati had not revived him through electric shock. Two days after he was revived he suffered a debilitating stroke, which left him partially paralyzed and confined to a bed in a nursing home. As of last March he could utter only a few faint words, and his medical bills had mounted to nearly $100,000.

A few months before his heart attack, Winter's wife had died from brain damage resulting from the shock resuscitation she had received after a heart attack of her own. Winter decided then that, should the situation arise, he did not want doctors to try to resuscitate him. He made his wish clear to both his children and his doctor.

Late last year Winter filed a lawsuit accusing the hospital of wrongfully saving his life. Lawsuits for "wrongful death," attributing a death to negligence, are common, but Mr. Winter's suit was reported to have been the first "wrongful life" case ever to be filed by a patient. Doctors gave Winter little chance for physical improvement, adding that he could possibly live for years in his present condition.

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least $6 billion per year. In present value terms, the immigrants of the late 1970's alone are costing us "$110 billion with a $27.5 billion corresponding loss in tax revenue."

Borjas overturns Simon's entire equation by reversing Simon's assertion that immigrants are more productive than natives. Borjas concludes that average immigrant earnings never catch up with native earnings. Hence immigrants will also pay less in taxes than natives. Moreover, immigrants on average use more, not less, welfare than natives. According to Borjas, the longer female-headed immigrant households live in the United States, the more their welfare usage increases, until after thirty years it exceeds that of natives by 10 percentage points.

Why did Simon find continuously improving immigrant productivity and upward mobility whereas Borjas found the opposite? The answer is simple. Simon's data are 20 years old and he did not bother to update them, despite the fact that he has read a 1985 study in which Borjas originally documented the decline in immigrant quality. Simon has dismissed the study—saying that it would take years to arrive at a satisfactory understanding of the phenomenon.

Borjas also reverses Simon's generalization that immigrants make rather than take jobs. According to Borjas, a doubling of the number of immigrants in the local labor market reduces the native wage by about 2 percent; a 10 percent increase in the number of immigrants reduces the labor force participation rate of white natives by .1 percent and reduces the number of weeks worked by .3 percent, not affecting the native unemployment rate.

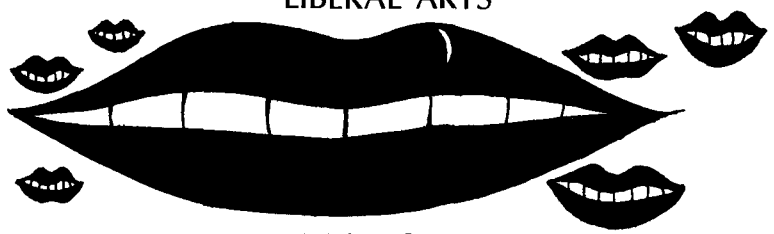
The major problem with Borjas' analysis of labor market effects is that it focuses on legal and not illegal immigrants. Simon has always blurred such differences. In my opinion they should be treated independently, if only because they have differential labor market effects. Legal immigrants are much less likely to displace natives than are illegal alien workers, because it is the illegals who often provide unfair competition for natives and immigrants by working for cash off of the books, either paying no taxes or underpaying taxes by getting excess deductions for dependents living abroad, and by undercutting legal wage and safety standards. My own 1982 and 1985 studies of displacement in the Houston metropolitan area indicate that for every 100 "illegal" alien workers, 70 legal workers are displaced or are not able to obtain employment.

Despite his somewhat cavalier treatment of the illegal alien problem, Borjas has brought a number of other important insights to current immigration policy, by far the most important of which is significant decline in the quality of immigrants since the 1950's and 1960's, including, of course, the three million immigrants legalized recently by the 1986 Immigration and Reform Act. It is hard to argue with Borjas' conclusion that these recent immigrant waves are placing a much greater burden on the American welfare state.

Borjas believes it is imperative, therefore, for the United States to raise the quality of future immigrants. Simon, surprisingly enough, agrees with Borjas on this point. As good neoclassical economists, both Borjas and Simon want to sell scarce U.S. greencards to the highest bidder. Borjas realizes, however, that the goal is to bring in high quality immigrants, and this may be inconsistent with selling to the highest bidders who, once they are here, may turn out to be unproductive. Borjas rightly admits that any visa allocation system is inherently discriminatory. For instance, the 1965 Immigration Act emphasized family reunification (and it was largely responsible for falling immigrant quality). It discriminated against the educated and skilled who had no family connections here.

What I find puzzling, particularly about Borjas' final conclusions, is that he does not seem to recognize the major alternative option—reduce the number of low quality immigrants who are so costly to the United States by cutting immigration quotas below the current 750,000 a year level. Do this by limiting family reunification to spouses and children rather than, as now, inclusion of parents and brothers and sisters. Then determine solely by labor-market criteria just how many skilled immigrants, if any, will productively benefit the U.S. economy without harming the millions of potentially upwardly mobile American workers currently working at low level jobs who would benefit from tight labor markets. From past experience, we know that only when there are shortages of labor do American employers, contractors, and recruiters break through the barrier of structural unemployment to hire and help train minority workers.

LIBERAL ARTS



THE BOTTOM LINE

Charles A. "Chep" Hurth III has given new meaning to "the bottom line." While a law student at St. Louis University in September 1987, Hurth made a rather peculiar barroom advance on one Maia Brodie, then a law student at Washington University: he bit her on the backside. His bite broke through the skin, left a nasty bruise, and reportedly caused Ms. Brodie to miss three days of classes and to seek medical treatment.

Hurth's claim that his bite constituted an expression of endearment which any woman should have appreciated did not wash with Ms. Brodie: she sued him for damages. She won her suit last April and was allowed to take a $27,500 "bite" out of Hurth's bank account; $25,000 of this amount was awarded in the form of punitive damages. As the *St. Louis Sun* summarized the case, "He bit hers, so she sued his."

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Poisoned at the Source

by M.E. Bradford

"The way to have power is to take it."
—W.M. Tweed

The Years of Lyndon Johnson: Means of Ascent
by Robert A. Caro
New York: Alfred A. Knopf;
506 pp., $24.95

◆

When on January 3, 1949, Lyndon Baines Johnson of Texas was sworn in as a United States senator, an era in the politics of his state had come to an end, a period that had begun when Reconstruction concluded. Similar events occurred in other Southern states, as when Harry Flood Byrd retired in Virginia and Walter George no longer filled his seat from Georgia. In retrospect, the process, though it took thirty years, seems to have been inexorable. Certainly there are those who would have us think so. But such was not the experience of thoughtful men who stood in the midst of the tornado when the modern style of campaigning came to Southern politics; and nowhere was the storm greater or the destruction of the familiar political landmarks more widespread than when Lyndon Johnson ran against former governor Coke Stevenson in 1948 —when the largest of the Southern states put aside the kind of leadership to which it had been attached since the time of its separate existence as an independent republic, sold its soul for a mess of pottage, and embraced as its hero a man whose chief distinction was not character but a capacity "to get things done." Robert A. Caro's *The Years of Lyndon Johnson: Means of Ascent* is the second volume of what will eventually be a four-part study. When finished, his biography will, I suspect, turn out to be the most important work of its kind to be written in this decade. That the biography is by stages filling out the image of LBJ as a special kind of monster, the absolutely political creature, is already producing howls from amongst those politicians who have an investment in the myth of the reformed Southern conservative who took advantage of the martyrdom of his predecessor in using the capacity of government to promote "good causes." But the reduction of that myth comes in a later volume and is only *foreshadowed* in these pages, chapters that tell instead of the middle years of Johnson's life following his 1941 defeat by Governor W. Lee "Pappy" O'Daniel and his return to the House of Representatives. The opportunism and ambition of *this* Lyndon Johnson corroborate the impression that readers of Caro's *The Years of Lyndon Johnson: The Path to Power* (1982) almost inevitably derived from that narrative of antecedents, boyhood, and early career.

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

The heart of Caro's second volume is not just the race between LBJ and the old-fashioned governor from the Hill Country. Nor is it about how Johnson and his friends unquestionably stole this election—with the assistance of Justice Hugo Black and the tacit support of a majority in the United States Supreme Court. Instead, Caro's focus is on the dramatic transformation of Johnson in that race from protégé of Franklin D. Roosevelt into pragmatic conservative and leader of the Southern bloc in the Congress. I have a friend here in Texas who, when Lyndon Johnson, once again a "national" Democrat, campaigned to be Vice-President or President of the United States, simply distributed to black clergymen, journalists, and honest liberal intellectuals copies of the candidate's early segregationist speeches and of the anti-Union and Red-baiting oratory that Johnson had employed to discredit one of the most genuine conservatives ever to be part of the public life in the Lone Star State. Caro begins his book with the anomaly of President Johnson's actions in behalf of civil rights, and with the singing of an anti-war version of "We Shall Overcome" outside the White House while Johnson suffered within. His point in this early material is that the President toward whom these lyrics were directed was never either a liberal or a conservative, but rather a man always hungry for power and interested in what might be done with it. As President of the United States, he misunderstood both of these enterprises, and discovered instead that power not connected firmly to an unshakable set of purposes and a traditional political rectitude, a Constitutional morality, provides only empty triumphs. There are never enough votes to shore up the self-respect of the politician who at bottom despises himself—which seems much of the time to have been the case with Lyndon Johnson.

M.E. Bradford is a professor of English at the University of Dallas.

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But before rehearsing the 1948 Senate contest of Box 13 and the Duke of Duval, legendary moments in Texas and American history, Robert Caro tells us about Lyndon Johnson as a nondescript Democratic Congressman who introduced no legislation and made only ten recorded speeches during 11 years in the House of Representatives. Here we read of Johnson's impatience with the slow process of advancement under the old regime of seniority domination—a system that gave to elderly Southern Democrats almost absolute legislative control of the business of the Republic. This Lyndon Johnson had made an early record in bringing electricity to his rural constituents. He had for a time raised money for the party and had courted the favor of President Roosevelt. He was the acknowledged disciple of Speaker Rayburn and, with the outbreak of World War II, became an ostensible "war hero," winning the Silver Star by observing, under fire, an air raid over New Guinea. During these six terms Johnson introduced seven bills and arranged for the passage of two—both affecting only his district. Caro informs us that all of his evidence from those who could remember Representative Johnson from the Tenth Congressional District of Texas indicates that he was cautious about taking sides in real controversies and reluctant to make enemies on either side of a question. Instead, he studied how to use his influence within the government and at the White House.

For a time Johnson considered the possibility of launching his career toward new and greater heights by way of a major military appointment. Once he was certain that President Roosevelt had no such plans for him, he turned his attention to making money through his contacts in the Federal Communication Commission. The owners of a small radio station in Austin, KTBC, wished to sell it or get a better license. The FCC would let them do neither until Mrs. Lyndon Johnson made an offer. At that point the application for transfer, a better place on the dial, and a proper license were swiftly approved. Lady Bird worked hard on this station, but it was Lyndon's ability to trade power for contacts and advertising that converted it into a gold mine, a business that made Lyndon Johnson a millionaire by 1948.

There is much personal detail and psychologically revealing information in *Means of Ascent*. What we learn about the operations of Congressman Johnson's office, about his vanity and misconduct, about his support for the Taft-Hartley Act, his opposition to FEPC, the anti-lynching bill, and every other proposal for improvements in civil rights demonstrates that he had not changed inwardly from what Caro showed us in the first volume of the biography, not even while he was turning his political coat in a conservative direction. His passionate oratory as an old-time segregationist should be required reading for the mythologizers who wish him to be remembered as Southern liberal, a man of deep, progressive commitments. Said Johnson in 1947, "The proposed civil rights legislation is a farce and a sham—an effort to set up a police state in the guise of liberty." In 1949, in his first important speech as a U.S. senator, he spoke to the same effect, arguing for an hour and a half in defense of the filibuster as a way of protecting Southern interests in perverting a civil rights law—interests that he identified as his own. As for lynching, it was the duty of the states to prosecute murderers. And if "a man can tell you whom you must hire, he can tell you whom you cannot employ." Throughout this portion of his career, in every vote and every public statement that he made concerning black hopes for a federally enforced uplifting of their race, the response of LBJ was, in effect, "They shall *not* overcome."

Means of Ascent is full of interesting characters, rich in resources from the public record and the testimony of political figures, many of whom are still living. The narrative of the stealing of the 1948 election is complete and detailed and should close that question for all but the most fanatical partisans. And the story of how Texas' big business conservatives—oil men, contractors, developers, and manufacturers—turned at the last minute to support Congressman Johnson against his independent and incorruptible adversary is as instructive to thoughtful conservatives now as it was to Texas politicians more than forty years ago. There is "conservatism"—and then, conservatism. Men like Johnson, with a reputation for being "practical," often get the support of big business and big money. Not all the venality in public life comes from the politicians.

But the heart of this book is the contrast between LBJ and Coke Robert Stevenson, the rancher from Junction, the classic Texas cattleman/lawyer who by dint of hard work, intellect, and honesty had by 1946 become the most respected and admired public figure in the state. Caro has done well to rest the drama of his study in the contrast between the rectitude of Governor Stevenson, "Mr. Texas," and Lyndon Johnson's absolute opportunism, his seemingly bottomless "capacity for deceit, deception, and betrayal."

With symbolic propriety, Stevenson was named after Richard Coke, the "Redeemer" governor of Texas who, starting in 1873, had led his people out from underneath the shadow of occupation and Yankee despotism and into the bright light of reconstituted self-government. Throughout his adult life, Stevenson was an admirer and defender of the Texas Constitution written by the Confederate veterans who, once they regained control of their state, had had enough of being "reformed" by the federal power, enough of lawlessness, black militia, progressive rhetoric, and wasteful spending. As county judge and member of the state legislature, speaker of the house and lieutenant governor, his political life was continuous with the example of those heroic forebears. And from 1941-1946 Stevenson was the most successful of

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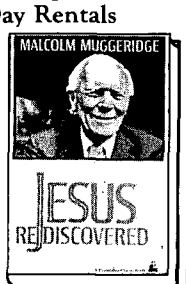

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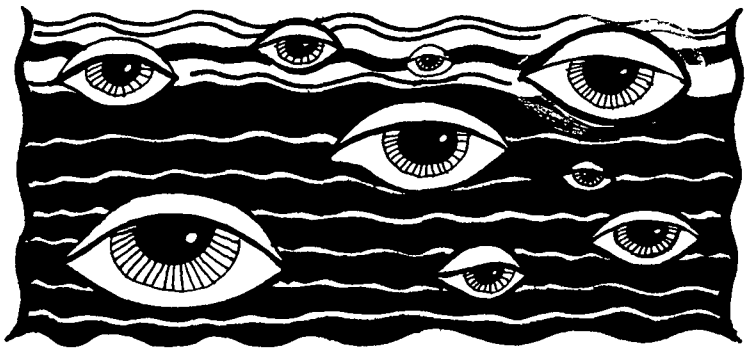
all Texas governors, a summary figure for all the virtues once honored by his people: a man who brought improvements to the state while leaving a $35,000,000 surplus in the treasury; a man who was never bought or sold. Liberal reviewers of this biography have objected to Caro's focus on Stevenson either because they know too little of Texas history or because they know too much. Down here Stevenson is still remembered, not in a vast library devoted to the protection of his reputation, but in the continuing conservatism of his people.

The contrast between Johnson and Stevenson is most directly visible in their styles of campaigning. Apart from the outright theft which brought him final victory, Johnson was the "packaged" candidate, sold by radio, newspapers, billboards, and mass mailings —by endless repetition and a bottomless purse; while Governor Stevenson offered himself in a series of public appearances where he spoke on the issues and, until outraged by calumny, was quiet about his opponent. Endorsements and an overwhelming statewide popularity were Stevenson's assets, with a record of having tripled old-age pensions, increased care for mental patients, instituted prison reform, and augmented support for public welfare. Johnson on the other hand depended on the bloc vote, on San Antonio, Corpus Christi, and other communities that were for sale. When Stevenson spoke about Lyndon Johnson he told the truth, whereas Johnson described the Hill Country reactionary as a "communist" and a "tool of the labor unions."

Repeated often enough to a gullible audience, the big lies created confusion. Lyndon had money enough to be on the radio three times a day during the last few weeks of the campaign. Stevenson's answers were given poor press coverage or completely ignored and his speeches on the radio were infrequent. Johnson stormed about, attacking the Truman civil rights bill, while Stevenson affirmed that the country was in need of a return to constitutional values. He offered himself as a servant of the people while Johnson was represented as a worker of miracles, an extension of the appetites of the electorate. Writes Caro, "In the context of the politics that was his life Lyndon Johnson would do whatever was necessary to win." Later he adds of his subject that his was "a morality in which nothing matters but victory and any maneuver that leads to victory is justified." Therefore, when his blitz of the Stevenson campaign was not completely successful, when Stevenson was elected, it is not at all surprising that Johnson seized what he could not earn rightfully, acting with an "utter inability to comprehend questions of morality or ethics raised by his actions, an utter inability to feel that there was even a possibility that he had violated accepted standards of conduct and might be punished for that violation."

It is most interesting that the massive outcry of liberal reviewers against this fine study (so large as to be itself a part of our intellectual history) centers on a protest against Caro's treatment of Coke Stevenson. This reaction has been so perfervid as to make the biographer and not his book the subject of angry interviews and *obiter dicta* from Johnson's political allies, cronies, and admirers and of uneasy commentary from the custodians of New South mythology. Usually the complaint centers on the evidence that Stevenson failed to use the power of government while in office or on the charge that he was a segregationist. Such nonsense, of course, ignores the fact that conservatives do not agree to liberal assumptions about the value of "energy" in the governor of a state. Moreover, in 1948, any Texas politician who had hopes of being elected at least officially agreed to the inherited pattern of race relations in his state, the system of separation instituted to minimize tensions between whites and blacks. In 1948 Lyndon Johnson said more against plans for racial reform than Coke Stevenson. But the former candidate was attempting to establish for himself "a new, ultra-conservative image." Stevenson (who had encouraged resolutions calling for better treatment of Mexican immigrants) had no such problem. The real trouble, however, that critics like Ronald Steel (writing March 11, 1990, in the *New York*

LIBERAL ARTS



POLICE PRIORITIES

Federal court records were unsealed last April in the case known as "water closet gate" —the secret videotaping of a police station's men's room. The documents revealed that while Concord (California) Police Chief George Straka was on vacation in the summer of 1986, Captain Bob Evans ordered a camera to be hidden in the ceiling above a urinal. Evans had hoped to catch the officer responsible for clogging the urinal with paper towels, which resulted in the flooding of the chief's adjacent office.

The documents also revealed that a police cadet was stationed in the rafters above the same urinal on July 23, 1986, two days before the camera was turned on, in an attempt to identify the vandal. These efforts failed to produce the guilty party, but they did succeed in producing something else: lawsuits. Four civil rights lawsuits have been filed, and 33 plaintiffs —most of them past or current Concord police officers—are seeking $34 million in damages. The city maintains that the plaintiffs' rights to privacy were not violated because the cadet stationed in the ceiling was ordered not to watch officers urinate and not to listen to any restroom conversations that might occur.

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Times Book Review) have with the Texas Cincinnatus from the falls of the Llano is that he undermines the moral melodrama of their version of Southern history. As does also Caro's book.

It is certainly instructive that Steel goes so far as to insist that it was for the best that the 1948 Texas election was stolen. If we have had any sentimental faith about the devotion of most liberal intellectuals to the regular operation of democratic institutions we should keep in mind Steel's casual observation, following an admission that theft triumphed with LBJ, that "it is hard to believe that the nation would have been better served with broad-shouldered Coke Stevenson in the Senate." What we hear in such language is the old proposition of Steel's kind: that "where the Left is served, any means will do." Caro's sin is that he is "nostalgic about the old Texas," has learned to appreciate its virtues—which is a mistake no liberal reviewer will make. But alas for Professor Steel. The deed is done, the book written and published. And the "parallel lives" of Johnson and Stevenson are in place, raising the even deeper question of what the great political changes, the statist onset of the 1960's signified; how they may best, in retrospect, be perceived.

For if underneath the sleazy bombast of Lyndon Johnson's campaigns there is nothing but corruption and more corruption, fathomless ambition, unattached to any recognizable principle of government or political morality; if it was *all* politics, just politics (a way of gaining and keeping power for its own sake), then how can the causes which Johnson promoted as they functioned within the patterns of his manipulation, self-projection, and opportunism escape the taint of their origin? And what if fair housing and the War on Poverty, the Job Corps, and the Public Accommodations law amount to no more than any of the rest of Johnson's politics, can best be explained as strategies for restraining conflict within the Democratic Party? What if these measures differ from other Johnson maneuvers only in their artfulness, their after-the-fact usefulness in deceiving newsmen and opinion makers, politicians and historians who never see beyond a noisy enthusiasm for ostensibly good causes: a posture that never quite deceived the electorate? Why not maintain against them that, as the life of Lyndon Johnson demonstrates, the whole enterprise of liberal politics—*effective liberal politics*—tends in most instances to be poisoned at its source: tends to be about power and little else? No wonder Robert Caro has been in trouble with custodians of the received wisdom. His Lyndon Johnson is more the "wicked Machiavel" than the malevolent subject of J. Evetts Haley's marvelous philippic, *A Texan Looks at Lyndon: A Study in Illegitimate Power*. With so much laid down as a predicate, now let Caro give us the rest of the story, of the usurper legitimized and then enthroned.

GREAT TOPICS, GREAT ISSUES

Economic Nationalism — January 1990 — Peter Brimelow's limited defense of economic nationalism, William Hawkins on unfettered trade, Alan Reynolds on foreign investment, Anthony Harrigan on transnational economic strategies, and Thomas Fleming on imperialism. Plus Janet Barlow's analysis of the Pete Rose scandal, Chilton Williamson's praise for George Kennan's memoirs, and Charlotte Low Allen's review of George Gilder's *Microcosm*.

Waiting for the End — February 1990 — Paul Gottfried on "the end of history," Thomas Fleming on millennialism, John Sisk on character and nuclear anxiety, and Hugh Ragsdale on Gorbachev and the prospect of Soviet reform. Plus Michael Lind on Robert Bork, Allan Brownfeld on South African reform, J.O. Tate's praise for Fred Chappell's new novel, and Mark Krikorian's discussion of illegal aliens and the 1990 census.

Government of the People — March 1990 — Don Anderson on ward government in the South, Ira Mehlman on the common problems of assimilating immigrants in Israel and the United States, R. Cort Kirkwood on the National Endowment for Democracy, and Thomas Fleming on why government *for* the people is not the same as government *of* the people. Plus Clyde Wilson on the Virginian roots of American values and Anita Evangelista on animal rights.

The Two Cultures — April 1990 — Edward Wilson on the role of biology in the formulation of culture, George Garrett on the role of the artist, and Thomas Fleming on the science of moral reasoning and the rise of "ethic specialists." Plus Samuel Francis on Whittaker Chambers, Murray Rothbard on the diary of H.L. Mencken, Frederick Turner on angels, and Forrest McDonald on the harsh realities of the civil rights movement.

Now That The Cold War Is Over — May 1990 — Murray Rothbard on foreign policy, Donald Devine on federalism, and Allan Carlson on the family policy of Sweden and of the U.S. Army. Plus Clyde Wilson on the legacy of James Madison, Paul Gottfried on the works of Jacob Neusner, Madison Smartt Bell's review of Chilton Williamson's novel *The Homestead*, and Brian Mitchell on the role women played in the U.S. invasion of Panama.

American Culture — June 1990 — Thomas Fleming on why government subsidizes affronts to public taste, George Garrett on why art is political when the government starts giving grants, and Christopher Lasch on the new class controversy. Plus Jeffrey Hart on Peggy Noonan, Wayne Lutton on Edward Abbey, Russell Kirk on the essays of Andrew Lytle, and Florence King on Kate Millett's *Loony Bin Trip*.

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Tar Heel Dead

by Clyde Wilson

"In my honest and unbiased judgment, the Good Lord will place the Garden of Eden in North Carolina, when He restores it to earth. He will do this because He will have so few changes to make in order to achieve perfection."
—Sam J. Ervin Jr.

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Dictionary of North Carolina Biography
Edited by William S. Powell
Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press; Vol. 1, 477 pp.; Vol. 2, 389 pp.; Vol. 3, 384 pp.; $49.95 each

◆

William S. Powell's magnificent portrayal of an American state through a collective biography of its men and women of eminence or interest has reached midpoint in its publication. I will try to explain why it is worthy of serious notice by readers of *the* magazine of American culture.

One of the great virtues of this collection is an old-fashioned scholarship that is at once skillful, thorough, aware without being trendy, and pious without being blind. The editor has spent a lifetime exploring every facet of the history of his state and mastering it with a thoroughness seldom matched today. The result is a grand and comprehensive design that leads to an inclusiveness, accuracy, and insight that is of permanent value.

Let's face it: the libraries are full of biographical dictionaries. Many of them, even some bearing the names of famous scholars as editors, are merely publishers' gimmicks, cut-and-pasted together by people who were unable or unwilling to see their subject freshly and comprehensively and full of articles written hastily by clock-watching "scholars" who merely compile and rewrite old mistakes of fact and judgment. Not so in this remarkable work.

Another consoling feature is the collaboration of hundreds of authors on some four thousand sketches, with professional scholars and amateurs (in the old and honorable sense of that term) appearing shoulder-to-shoulder without embarrassment. The collaboration is reminiscent of that golden age of American culture around the turn of the 20th century, when history and all other endeavors were dominated by gifted amateurs, the last great promising moment before "experts" and "progressives" took government and learning away from the people and ruined them forever. We North Carolinians have always been behind the times in many ways—and glad of it.

Pardon me if I talk about "we." Though I have been in exile south of the Catawba for some years,

I'm a Tar Heel born
And a Tar Heel bred.
And when I die,
I'll be a Tar Heel dead.

Unlike some neighbors, I will not mention that we don't like to brag. Our motto is "*Esse Quam Videri*": to be rather than to seem. But I will point out to a world whose perspective is slanted by New York and Hollywood that we make up a pretty big slice of America, both in size and history. For

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instance, we are the tenth most populous state (1980 census), a position we have not deviated far from throughout this century. We are six times bigger than New Hampshire, twice as big as Iowa or Oregon, considerably bigger than Indiana or Wisconsin. Yet for some reason our presidential primary, which has been competitive for decades now, is never noticed like those states' by the media moguls. (Could they be *prejudiced*!??)

At the time of the American Revolution, we were bigger than any of the 13 colonies except Virginia and Pennsylvania (that is, bigger than New York or Massachusetts) and growing fast. And unlike some states I won't mention, our influence was always heavily on the patriot side, especially after we broke the Scotch Tories at the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge, which, if American history were ever told right, would be as famous as Bunker Hill.

And we have a pretty long history, by American standards, and including three rebellions *before* the Revolution, going back almost four centuries now. We have always made up our own minds, and always been American republicans. Not democrats, not progressives, not liberals, not conservatives in your Wall Street sense, but American republicans. Our Revolutionary heroes chronicled here, to name just a few—John Ashe, Richard Caswell, William Richardson Davie, Cornelius Harnett, James Iredell, Willie Jones—were fully the equals, as patriots and statesmen, of some of the better-advertised chaps from other states.

Perhaps our most representative leader of all time was Mr. Macon, my account of whom, for the next forthcoming volume of the DNCB, appears herein. As I said, we think for ourselves. Consider Sam Ervin or Jesse Helms. You will have a rather hard time fitting them into any categories devised by the newspapers or the Stanford political science department. (Ervin appears herein. Senator Helms does not. The DNCB's one discrimination is against the living, who are not included.)

Not only are we a large state with a history a good deal older than the United States and an independent spirit, but we are an empire within ourselves. A coastal (plantation) region, a piedmont (yeomen and industry) region, and a mountain region, each one distinct and bigger than the similar regions in any other Southern state. You can find within our broad bounds anything that you can find in any Southern state, most of anything that you can describe as generally American, and a great deal that is not found anywhere else.

When it came time for the Civil War, we did not want to rush into things. But when others had fouled it up beyond help, we did not hesitate. We told Mr. Lincoln what he could do with his troop requisition and voted 120-0 for secession. We provided 45 generals to the Confederacy (Civil War buffs will find in the DNCB a host of familiar heroes like Gilmer, Grimes, Hoke, Pender, Pettigrew, Ramseur, and many others) and nearly a fourth of the men who carried General Lee's bayonets for four years. But we also produced George W. Kirk, who fought a guerrilla war against the Confederacy from the mountains; General John Gibbon, who commanded some of the federal troops on Cemetery Ridge; and Solomon Meredith, who moved off to Indiana and ended up in command of the Iron Brigade, the best outfit in the *Northern* army. As I said, we do our own thinking.

We have always exercised an undue influence inside the Congress, where smarts count more than publicity. Consider, in the 19th century, James I. McKay, chairman of the House Ways and Means throughout the Jacksonian era, or Willie P. Mangum, president pro tem of the Senate, or William A. Graham, the Whig candidate for Vice President in 1852, men who in their own day were as famous as Clay or Webster. Or in the 20th century, Claude Kitchin, Woodrow Wilson's floor manager in the House, or Carl T. Durham, first and for many years chairman of the Joint Atomic Energy Committee. Or outside the Congress, Josephus Daniels, probably the most powerful Democratic editor in the country, who was FDR's chief when he was assistant secretary of the Navy and who always referred to FDR as Franklin, even after he was a fourth-term President.

Maybe your taste runs to the bizarre—people who did not hold public office but who did something unusual. How about the assassin Thomas C. Dula, who is immortalized in the folk song "Tom Dooley" and who was in the same Confederate regiment as my great-grandfather and his brothers? Or

LIBERAL ARTS

PROHIBITION—A KILLER OF AN IDEA

Herbert Hoover called it "a great social and economic experiment noble in motive and far reaching in purpose." It's better known as the prohibition of alcohol, and the 1980's showed that the idea is far from dead.

That Mikhail Gorbachev's anti-alcohol program failed is well known in the West. What is less well known is the extent to which this campaign affected Soviet society. A shortage of sugar immediately developed as bootleggers began stockpiling this key ingredient. A shortage of toothpaste then followed: most Soviet toothpaste has an alcohol base, which citizens started drinking once they had distilled it from the toothpaste. Some Soviet citizens even began drinking perfume, jet fuel, and industrial alcohol. Eleven thousand Soviet citizens died from drinking surrogate alcohol in 1988.

Much the same has happened in the Indian state of Gujarat. Here alcohol is banned out of respect to the state's most famous native son, Mahatma Gandhi. Not surprisingly, bootlegging thrives in Gujarat, as does disease. Illegal breweries operate in unsanitary conditions, and sewage water and rusty vats have contributed to contaminated brews. The city of Baroda has been particularly hard hit. As recently reported by *India Tribune Magazine*, three hundred people were admitted to Baroda's SSG Hospital in March 1989 because of alcohol contamination. About two hundred of these patients died, and a dozen were left blinded. "The actual number [of dead] will never be known," reports the *Tribune*, because "many die in their homes as their families are afraid of police problems."

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how about Eng and Chang Bunker, the original Siamese twins, who, after they made their pile on Barnum's circuit, lived the rest of their lives alternately on adjacent plantations near Andy Griffith's Mount Airy, the prototype for "Mayberry"?

Or maybe you don't care much for politicians but like business and professional types. How about industrialists like the Dukes, Haneses, and Reynoldses? Or James K. Hall, the Southern Karl Menninger? You want writers? How about Thomas Dixon, who was not only a fabulously successful evangelist in New York and Boston but sold millions of copies of *The Clansman*, which formed the basis for *The Birth of a Nation*? Or Johnson J. Hooper, not only the grandnephew of one of our Signers of the Declaration of Independence and secretary of the Confederate Congress but also creator of the fictional Captain Simon Suggs, the true ancestor of Faulkner's Snopeses? You will find in the DNCB significant figures from literally every field of human endeavor—entrepreneurship, education, religion, all the arts, sciences, and professions.

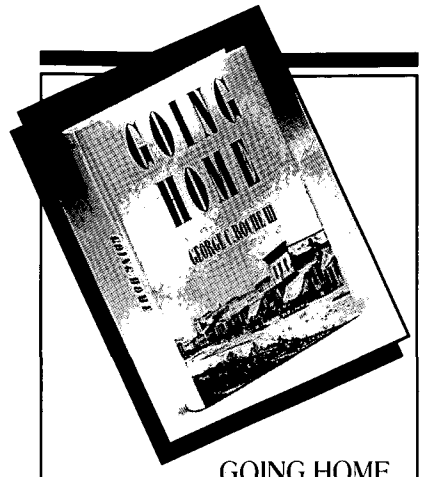
Nor would I have you think that the women, and the blacks, and the Native Americans have been neglected. They are very well represented. How about George Moses Horton, the black poet who taught the children of prominent families in antebellum days? Or James C. Jones, the free black man from Raleigh who was President Davis's coachman and trusted confidential messenger during The War? I could go on, and on.

Throughout the 19th century, to an even greater degree than most of the older states, we drained off most of our population increase to the heroic endeavor of settling the West. Mr. Powell has recognized this as an important part of our history, and has included not only those who played a significant role in our state but the Tar Heels-born who built up newer commonwealths. We played, as is obvious, a major role in every Southern state to the West, all the way to Texas—providing them with governors, congressmen, clergymen, editors, educators, and soldiers—Presidents Jackson, Polk, and Johnson, and the famous Senator Benton of Missouri, just to mention the top of the list.

But, what is less well-known, our natives played almost as big a role in the old Northwest, the region north of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi. Consider Abraham Lincoln's mother. Or William Allen, who walked to Ohio as a boy and was for years in the antebellum period a senator and boss of the Democratic Party in that state. Or "Uncle Joe" Cannon, who as a child left the Quaker settlements near Greensboro, moved to Illinois, and grew up to be the most powerful Speaker the House of Representatives has ever had. Or Richard J. Gatling, who left the family plantation in Hertford County to go off to the Midwest and invent and manufacture the Gatling gun. In fact, if you are a WASP whose family settled the Midwest before 1860, you have a one-in-three chance of having North Carolina blood in your veins. This is not to mention later and less systematic Tar Heel immigration; Richard Weaver of The Ingersoll Foundation's Weaver Award, for instance.

The Far West? How about Kit Carson, the famous mountain man of New Mexico? A longtime Chief Justice of Washington State? Joe Lane, one of the great pioneer figures of Oregon? Or O.P. Fitzgerald, who not only founded Methodism in California but was a contemporary of Bret Harte and Mark Twain in developing California literature?

Why am I so enthusiastic about the DNCB? Not only because of the quality of the scholarship and the masterful inclusiveness of the design in every respect. Not only because of the tradition and civic heritage that is represented by the *pietas* of its conception and broad collaboration of its execution, both so rare and unexpected in this day and age. But because it contains vast stores of material on the real life and real deeds and real thoughts and motives of a large slice of real Americans. In a dark time when our culture is reduced to trashy novels and MTV, our politics to whining and smugness and hypocritical platitudes, and our history to Hollywood docudramas and warped ahistorical interpretations of our great documents and events, this is something for which we can be truly thankful.



GOING HOME
by George Roche

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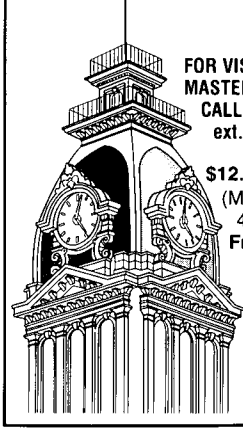

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Forty Years in the American Wilderness

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Confessions of an Original Sinner
by John Lukacs
New York: Ticknor & Fields;
328 pp., $19.95

◆

It is probably fair to say that John Lukacs, the Hungarian-American historian and historical philosopher, author of 13 books, remains after more than forty years an enigma to American historians in particular and to American political intellectuals in general. The historical profession, which persists in refusing to accept him fully into the sodality, has been joined in its dismissive attitude by political writers and architects of the left and right, on both of which he remains widely distrusted. *Confessions of an Original Sinner*—called "Confessions of a Reactionary" in working ms., before the publishers objected to so provocative a title—is Mr. Lukacs' "autohistory," or "history of some of my thoughts and beliefs." "Because of the goodness of God," he writes, "I have had a happy unhappy life, which is preferable to an unhappy happy one." *Confessions* is pervaded by a bittersweet quality of loneliness and of intellectual isolation, though never to the point of self-pity, John Lukacs being far too self-aware a man for that sort of indulgence. Unwrapping himself by degrees from the enigma with which enemies and detractors have surrounded him, he reveals himself to be a profoundly human (as well as a humanly profound) man: the "unoriginal Original Sinner" of this very moving book.

John Lukacs was born in 1924 in Hungary and lived there until 1946 when, after being smuggled across the Austrian border with help from the Americans, he arrived in the United States, whose government accorded him the status of Displaced Person. Seven years later he took the oath of citizenship in the Federal Building in Philadelphia, forty miles east of the town of Phoenixville where he has lived and worked now for nearly four decades.

Lukacs is the son of a Jewish mother and a Catholic father, baptized into the church, and raised in the home of his mother and stepfather after his parents were divorced when he was eight years old. He had a careful and cosmopolitan upbringing by his solid bourgeois family, who saw to it that he learned English at an early age and sent him to school in England, from which he returned just before the outbreak of war. With his mother and a dozen relatives and friends, Lukacs spent the winter of 1944-45 in a cellar in Budapest: a deserter, carrying false military identity papers, liable to be shot or hanged at an instant's notice by the National Socialists or by the field gendarmerie if his situation were discovered. He was waiting, like so many other Hungarians, for the Russians, who progressed however very slowly and waited to besiege the city until they had surrounded it entirely, which they did only just before Christmas. Subsequent events in Hungary helped to determine not only the shape of 20th-century history after 1945 but the understanding of that history by the young man who was to become his generation's most original, penetrating, and farsighted interpreter of it.

Paradoxically, John Lukacs—who has gained a reputation among American conservatives as a man insufficiently impressed by what was known in the late 40's, the 50's, and the early 60's as the Communist Menace—was never among those Hungarians who thought that, for better or for worse, Marxist-Leninist ideology represented The Future. At an early age, he became convinced that Marxism was a relic of ponderous 19th-century thought, completely irrelevant to the ideas and aspirations of the commonality of man owing to its reliance on a total misapprehension of human nature. This did not mean that the fact of Soviet military and political power in portions of Europe was not a foreseeable reality for some years to come. On the other hand, that reality needed not, in Lukacs' opinion, to entail the accepted division of the European states between East and West, while, as matters stood, "The commitment to the defense of Western Europe meant that there would be no commitments regarding Eastern Europe, even though the latter condition was obscured by all kinds of rhetoric." Several years before it became fashionable—indeed *de rigueur*—in the United States to be anticommunist, when the American press and the American Department of State still gave thanks for the continued presence of their affable old ally, Uncle Joe Stalin, in the Kremlin, John Lukacs was already a convinced anti-communist. Later—in the 50's, during the McCarthy period, and later still in the 1980's, with Reagan's rhetorical flourishes against the Evil Empire—Lukacs came to think of himself as an anti-anticommunist, though not of the stereotypical variety. Unlike Whittaker Chambers, Lukacs did not doubt that his was the winning side; unlike Chambers too, he was appalled by what he regarded as the spectacle of Americans turning themselves into lunatics in their frantic attempts to ensure that the cause of World Freedom should prevail. "The American anti-communism of the Fifties was abstract, extreme, self-serving, and false," he concludes today. "It was abstract, because the attribution of every kind of evil and immorality to Communists was not only unhistorical but utterly unreal."

While John Lukacs' work was earning him disfavor, suspicion, and enmity on the right, it was also creating disdain on the left—the academic left in particular. From early manhood, Lukacs had dreamed of writing a new kind of history, one that would emphasize *how* people at any given period had thought about events, as well as *what*: a kind of history that would stress what he calls

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"the increasing intrusion of mind into the structure of material events." Economic forces, he was beginning to perceive, far from being the determining facts of history, are not even really very important ones. "It took me a quarter of a century to formulate this: that the very opposite of not only what Karl Marx but also of what Adam Smith had said is true — that the essential matter, whether in the history of persons or in that of nations, is what they think and believe, while the material organization of society and of their lives is the superstructure of *that*." This insight was not of course one calculated to appeal to American social scientists in the material heyday of their materialistic thought; even less welcome, perhaps, was John Lukacs' conviction that "history is more than an academic discipline . . . it is a form of thought." In what he regards as his most important book, *Historical Consciousness*, published first in the late 60's, Lukacs developed this idea, arguing that a consciousness of history — entailing the ability to think in historical terms — is a product of the past few centuries and hence of the modern world, which is presently drawing to a close. "[I]magination," he speculates in his latest book, "has its own history, part and parcel of the evolving historicity of our consciousness, which is probably the only kind of evolution there is, and perhaps — *contra* Darwin — the only kind of evolution worth thinking and talking about."

Ultimately, no aspect of John Lukacs' work has been as unpopular — in fact, loathsome — as its author's recognition that, while communism has been a spent force in the world since at least 1945, the regnant ideology of modern times has been nationalism, which bodes well to survive the passing of the modern age itself. "The principle power among men," Lukacs insists in *Confessions*, "is still nationalism . . . [which] survived Hitler, in every part of the world from Israel to Ulster." In *The Last European War* (1976), Lukacs invited his readers to give due weight to the noun "Socialism" (as in "National Socialism"), rather than stressing, as is usually done, the Nazi modifier; also to consider how many supposedly progressive parties and governments around the world have employed the word in order to divert attention from their primarily nationalist aims. In their resentment, some of Lukacs' critics have suggested that Lukacs himself is some kind of totalitarian apologist, despite his having been repeatedly at pains over the years to stress that he is a patriot, not a nationalist; a reactionary, not a conservative. The distinction, he claims, was borne in upon him as a boy before the war, when he began to notice the differences between a speech by Hitler and one by Churchill — in particular the difference between the fields of reference employed by the speakers. The reactionary, Lukacs perceived, was concerned with traditions and constellations of old values; the "conservative" with blood, tribal resentments, and aggressions. Having learned this invaluable lesson, the young Lukacs ceased to refer to himself as a "socialist," accepting instead the identity of the author of this book: "I [am] a reactionary, a Westerner, and a bourgeois."

Among the most interesting passages in *Confessions of an Original Sinner* are those describing John Lukacs' impressions of the United States during his early years in this country. In New York he was struck by the *oldness* of the faces he saw around him, the faces of men and women prematurely aged. It was in their aspirations that they were old, he decided: a theory that seemed congruent with his developing idea that, intellectually speaking, Americans are at least a generation behind their European contemporaries. Only superficially was America a new country, and this was partly owing to the fact of its having forgotten one of the oldest of old things. "When I set foot in the United States, I was not newly born; I was not a New Man. I was a representative of the doctrine of Original Sin." As such, he was also a representative of reaction: of the trust in land over technology, in history over evolution. For this reason, his adopted country has not always been very appreciative of — nor even terribly kind to — him. As such again, finally, has John Lukacs been, for nearly forty years, the voice of the prophet, crying in the American wilderness.

Chilton Williamson, Jr.'s latest book is The Homestead, *a novel.*

Homme Sérieux

by F.W. Brownlow

Rudyard Kipling
by Martin Seymour-Smith
New York: St. Martin's Press;
375 pp., $22.95

◆

Kipling should be a fascinating subject for literary history. He was enormously gifted and successful, the child of a modest, nonconformist Anglo-Scot family that, besides producing him, also produced his cousin, the conservative prime minister Stanley Baldwin. One of his aunts married Edward Burne-Jones; another married Sir James Baldwin, chairman of the Great Western Railway, and a third married E.J. Poynter, a distinguished Victorian artist who became director of the National Gallery and president of the Royal Academy. Swinburne and the Rossettis were at Kipling's parents' wedding reception. What social quirk could have caused this run of family successes? Kipling himself became the first really important English writer to work in a context wider than that provided by England itself. He was born in India, where he spent his first two years; grew up in England, and then began his career by returning to India; went back to England, married an American, and lived in America; finally returned to England again, and ended life as a Sussex man. The result, as T.S. Eliot said, was "a peculiar detachment and remoteness from all environment," the source of the strange, sometimes visionary objectivity of his best writing. And of course Kipling wrote at a fascinating time in English history, the decades of imperial self-consciousness to which he was laureate, critic, and analyst.

None of this interests Martin Seymour-Smith very much. He is a man with a thesis which, insofar as I can follow it, goes like this: Kipling began life like all bright boys as a good liberal with normal homosexual proclivities, offset in his case by a strong impulse to impose himself upon others. On coming to man's estate and discovering his sexual tendencies, he recoiled into out-and-out imperialism and authoritarianism. He did, however, have one satisfactory love affair, with an American literary entrepreneur from Vermont called Wolcott Balestier, a man with very

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beautiful ears, "enormous innocent ears," says Seymour-Smith: "The winglike ears add to his delicacy, and must have excited women and others who could love men." Wolcott then died, and Kipling married his unattractive sister because she knew his guilty secret. And that would have been that, except that Kipling was also a genius possessed by a daimon that kept the flame of liberal and humane truth alive in him whether he liked it or not, and drew impeccably truthful, liberal, and proto-modernist work out of him much as a fine pianist might speak through a Bösendorfer.

When Edmund Wilson, a socialist who loathed England and the middle classes about equally, said that Dickens was a divided personality driven by unacknowledged fantasies of rage and despair, this proposition, however fantastic, was at least original and had some shock value. By now it is a cliché applicable to anyone. Seymour-Smith does his best in a combative foreword to this first American edition of his book to present himself as an *homme sérieux*, shocker of prudes, neoimperialists, Kiplingites, conservatives, and "the tabloid-minded," but he has written a dull book in banal, clumsy English: not so much a life of Kipling as a muddled contribution to a running argument that has been going on far too long back there in the twilight empire. An American reader simply does not know what Seymour-Smith is talking about when he says that Kipling's politics were hooliganism, or that "Imperialism, of all the political crazes that have arisen in the past century and a half, is the most nakedly egocentric and subjective." On the face of it, those remarks—and others like them—don't make much sense. One longs for facts and explanations. As for Kipling's latent homosexuality, it is the book's King Charles' head, always turning up in its predictable, arbitrary way. Given the pop-psychology of our times, Kipling—unhandy, pudgy, unathletic, shortsighted, and certainly no beauty—is a sitting duck for this kind of hypothesizing, but no evidence is provided for it. In fact this whole book is written on a bibliography of 13 items, and there are no references—not even when the author tells us that Winston Churchill slept with the English film star and musical comedy composer Ivor Novello (composer of "Keep the Home Fires Burning"), and found it a musical experience.

For whom then is the book written? On the evidence of its content it is for readers who have little grasp of the principles of evidence, proof, and judgment, and who are uninterested in detail and reality. They know very little about the literature, art, and music of Kipling's time. They are suspicious of authority. They distrust anything conservative, and although they can afford $23 for this book, they take it for granted that the working classes are the natural superiors of the middles and the uppers. They have a taste for agnostic but daffy aphorisms, e.g., "Achievement rarely stems, initially, from virtue; it usually stems from vice," or "A person with a sense of duty, however narrow and hateful that sense may be, is sometimes preferable to one without one." They enjoy seeing T.S. Eliot called a right-wing extremist, and they get a little thrill out of hearing the old pre-1914 British army called "mercenary" instead of "professional." In other words, they are thoroughly conventional in a way Kipling was not. It is unlikely that they will go on to read Kipling himself, but they would probably enjoy seeing this book turned into a series for public television or made the subject of an interview by Bill Moyers. And perhaps that is what the publisher is counting on.

F.W. Brownlow is a professor of English at Mount Holyoke in Massachusetts.

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Good Books That Sell Good

by David R. Slavitt

Hollywood
by Gore Vidal
New York: Random House;
437 pp., $19.95

◆

Gore Vidal's "American chronicle" is a *roman fleuve* that looks beyond Powell's *The Music of Time* to Roger Martin du Gard's *Les Thibaults* series of the 1920's and 30's, and what it demonstrates is that our assumptions about popular culture are incomplete, if not actually wrong. The notion that commercial success varies inversely with quality may smack of smartness and cynicism, but how else can we account for what we see even in a cursory glance at the best-seller lists? Week after week, the message is clear that universal literacy may not, after all, have been such a good idea.

There are occasional exceptions, odd and quirky careers of good writers who beat the odds (and set up all those innocents in writing programs for a lifetime of heartbreak). It isn't all Danielle Steel and Robin Cook and Robert Ludlum, after all. John Updike makes a good living; Saul Bellow and Isaac Singer prove that, with a little help from the Swedes, one can command a certain degree of attention; Umberto Eco has shown us that, if the stars are in the right conjunctions, one can even force-feed a fair amount of untranslated Latin down the gagging throats of the book-buying public. But the canny publishers prefer the probabilities and go with what works: the tried and true falsities and tripe of Stephen King and Sidney Sheldon.

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Vidal doesn't go that way, but he has been flying high as a popular writer. A million five, which I'm told was his advance on *Hollywood*, may not be a record, but it's nothing to sniff at, particularly when the performance is as consistent and reliable as his has been. "I am," he likes to say, "the second-richest serious writer in the world." This sets the listener up so that those who are lively enough to have elicited the performance generally ask who, then, is the richest. (It's Edward Albee, but only because Albee bought a lot of Jasper Johns' paintings back when they were in the lower six figures, and they have appreciated and are in the lower seven now.) After him, it's Vidal—and with books that are not deplorable. He's always good for fun, and there's always wit in evidence, an actual liveliness to the sentences, a syntactical snap that is admirable and winning.

I don't mean this to sound like faint praise. To get away with well-made sentences in that kind of book is already an amazing feat. A friend of mine was once told by an editor to remove from his chapter headings the epigraphs he'd spent much time in hunting down. Why? Because they reminded people that they were reading a book! This editor's view was that people prefer the mental movie to the actual text on the page, which ideally should be totally transparent. It is not an idea shared by Vidal, who delights in the tricks and turns of the English sentence. It is amazing that he gets away with this, but he has done so, over and over again.

Better, he has written other kinds of books. He has collections of essays, many of which have appeared along the way in the *New York Review of Books*. And he has his "serious" fiction, which is to say his seriously *frivolous* novels (the lower-middle- and middle-middle-brow reader can forgive well-turned phrases but not outrageous jokes and camp): *Two Sisters*, *Myra Breckinridge*, and *Duluth* are wonderfully funny, impishly intelligent books his publisher would prefer not to touch because they are only likely to puzzle and therefore enrage the readers he has attracted by the "American chronicle," and the risk is that they will reduce revenues. Still, for fear that Vidal will take his herd of literary cash cows into other pastures, they do what they have to (but without advertising these titles).

How does he manage this double life? I honestly wish I knew. My best guess is that by focusing his attention on the prose he is able to operate like a good craftsman and not worry too much about the blueprint, which is conventional, conservative, and even retrograde. His appeal, furthermore, is to a truth beyond the text—which is what the readers in the slower group much prefer. This is America he's talking about, after all. If it is true, as I believe it to be, that the most solemn books any of us ever encountered were junior high school social studies texts, then Vidal has the authority of those double-columned pages working for him as he assures us that we're not wasting our time and that this is somehow good for us, even while it entertains. He is like the kid in the classroom who could make us laugh, rolling his eyes and making faces while the teacher droned on about boring things like the Zimmerman telegram and its effect on Wilson's neutrality policy (with which *Hollywood* actually begins).

Vidal avoids condescension. He has his views about Burr and Lincoln and Hearst and Warren G. Harding—whose personal style he finds piquant but whom he regards nonetheless as a shrewd politician—and it must be pleasing to him to create, more or less *ex nihilo*, impressions of these historical figures in the minds of many of his fans. It is perhaps for that reason that he is so patient of the constraints of the popular novel, accepting the limitations of the form the way he accepted the limitations of screenwriting and television script-making. It is not just intelligence that allows him to do this but a sure sense of who he is. His own reading—as set forth in *Views from a Window: Conversations with Gore Vidal* (published ten years ago)—runs to Flaubert, Proust, James, Meredith, George Eliot, and Thomas Love Peacock. And he has suggested that Gibbon "has had as profound an effect on me as any writer. I don't mean stylistically so much as the effect of his attitude."

The attitude is that of amused tolerance that is nonetheless proud of what it can tolerate. Early on, there is a reference to Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels as "an amiable Southern newspaper editor, who hated war and alcohol and so had been entrusted with the American Navy." The contempt for Daniels is evident in the joke, the machinery of which is in the "and so."

That's a characteristic flick, and what makes Vidal worth reading. It's heady stuff for best-sellerdom.

David R. Slavitt is a poet and novelist whose Lives of the Saints *was recently published by Atheneum.*

The Age of Nixon

by Russell Kirk

Richard Nixon and His America
by Herbert S. Parmet
Boston: Little, Brown and Company; 784 pp., $24.95

◆

This temperate and thorough book commences with a detailed description of President Nixon's activities on May 8 and 9, 1970, when thousands of young people had poured into Washington to protest the American expedition into Cambodia. This was the most dramatic of the several crises in Richard Nixon's life. As Dr. Parmet writes, "Nixon's postmortem account of those agitated days conveyed a detachment that can variously be described as offering brave, strong, determined leadership; or, to critics, a presidential response that was indifferent and insensitive to the rebellions tearing the nation he had vowed to reunite."

This reviewer can attest that the former description, not the latter, is the truth of the matter. For I spent nearly an hour, late in the afternoon of that Friday, May 8, conversing with Mr. Nixon in the White House, privately—a meeting unmentioned by Herbert Parmet, although elsewhere he describes the correspondence between Richard Nixon and Russell Kirk.

On that fateful afternoon President Nixon did not discuss at all the frantic demonstrations being held in the capi-

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tal's streets as we talked. Cool as the center seed of a cucumber, he took up with me, instead, such concerns as whether America might be decadent; from what sources any President might obtain support when he must make some unpopular decision; and the seriousness of the environmental problems. Presently he said, "Dr. Kirk, have we any hope?" For emphasis, he repeated the question: *"Have we any hope?"*

Feeling rather like Chateaubriand consulted by Louis XVIII on the future of his regime, I endeavored (unlike Chateaubriand on that occasion) to encourage the President, pointing out that periods of decay and of renewal often alternate in a nation's history, and mentioning at some length the course of the Byzantine system. Hope feeds on hope, I suggested: it is all a matter of popular conviction and popular action. Mr. Nixon's spirits appeared to respond: so he always had believed, he told me. Throughout our talk—which had been arranged earlier, on April Fool's Day—he appeared leisured and unaffected by the mass demonstrations.

That Friday evening he held a press conference; then slept a little; and a little after four on the morning of May 9, accompanied by Manolo Sanchez (his valet), drove down to the Lincoln Memorial, where he talked with some surprised young demonstrators. He wished to walk back to the White House, through Lafayette Park; his aides, who had caught up with him, had great difficulty in persuading him to return by car.

All this makes a strong beginning to Parmet's book, for it shows Richard Nixon's courage and his self-possession. Perhaps he was too self-possessed: he had no small talk, he was acutely aware of his enemies' power, and he was not at all sure that anyone would back him up in time of crisis—a suspicion sufficiently justified by the behavior, in the Watergate affair, of various close subordinates. Throughout his political career, he might have said, with Coriolanus, "Alone I did it."

Professor Parmet's big book—more than 750 pages—is a portrait of the age of Nixon, as well as a biography of the politician whose periods of success and of defeat alternated so violently as did the fortunes of the Byzantine Empire. The author's mastery of detail, from 1876 to 1990, is really impressive; Herbert Parmet knows the literature of politics, too. He is the author of a book about Eisenhower and of two about John F. Kennedy. It would be difficult to find any biographer of recent statesmen more judicious and penetrating.

This book's account of the Watergate disaster, the impeachment proceedings, and the President's resignation is surprisingly, but mercifully, succinct—presumably because those subjects already have been treated by others exhaustively and exhaustingly. Readers not old enough to recall periodical reports of that controversy, or to have read the early books about Watergate, might do well to turn to Senator Carl Curtis' book *Forty Years Against the Tide* (1986), Chapter XIII, "The Harassing of a President." (Curtis led the defense of Mr. Nixon in the Senate.)

Shortly after Mr. Nixon's resignation, I wrote to him, mentioning John Adams' remark that in 1800 unpopularity had fallen upon him "like the Tower of Siloam. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*" But Richard Nixon was not broken. When questioned about how Nixon had kept sane in the closing months of his presidency, his successor, Gerald Ford, replied with something like a sob, "He was strong!" Nowadays he is praised for his sagacity in newspapers that once denounced him; his books have influence; the glory has not wholly departed.

Once upon a time, before Mr. Nixon was elected President, I had an assistant of mine, a handwriting expert among other things, analyze a Nixon holograph. What he found was remarkably different from the image that most journalists thrust upon the public. To judge by his handwriting, Mr. Nixon was not conspicuously practical or "pragmatic." Rather, he took long views, and was earnestly desirous of being esteemed by posterity. (Resignation from office therefore could not have been more painful to any man.) Although conservative by general disposition, he was fond of innovating reforms: but possessing no high degree of imagination himself, he sought out advisors who were imaginative.

Of such, Henry Kissinger and Daniel Patrick Moynihan were the chief. The latter's resignation late in 1970 was a blow: Nixon had desired "more stimulating people to talk to." As Parmet observes, "Nixon would miss Moynihan. 'Every time we get a little down, every time we need a little inspiration,' he told the cabinet just before Christmas, 'we're going to want to call him back to give it to us.'"

Strange though it seems, Richard Nixon still has a future. Parmet concludes his perceptive book with these sentences: "If he were twenty years younger, cynics would have been quick to conclude that he was merely planning another resurrection. Richard Nixon, whether leading the Orthogonians [a Whittier College student society], the Republican Party, or the nation, wondered what he had to do to be taken seriously. Such determined absorption in vital issues is rare among American politicians."

Amen to that. In his conduct of foreign affairs, Nixon will be commended by the next century's historians. By sealing Haiphong harbor—as, early in 1967, he had told me he intended to do—he won the war in Vietnam, so disastrously bequeathed to him by Lyndon Johnson; but then Congress lost the war after all, by deserting South Vietnam during the Watergate fracas. His domestic policies, income-sharing in particular, were less happy; yet until Watergate he frustrated the enemies of order in America. And he was an honest public man. (At the height of the Watergate struggle, when Nixon stood accused of some amorphous corruption, I wrote in a newspaper column, "Mr. Nixon is not a crook"; he repeated my words, to reporters not much interested in the facts.)

As a well-written and convincing picture of an upright but unfortunate public man, and of American life and politics during most of the 20th century, Dr. Parmet's book on Nixon may become the standard work in its controversial field.

Russell Kirk lives in Mecosta, Michigan.

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Lost in Wonderland

by Gregory McNamee

Disappearing Through the Skylight: Culture and Technology in the Twentieth Century
by O.B. Hardison, Jr.
New York: Viking Press;
389 pp., $22.95

◆

It's a brave new world out there. Factory workers are made of metal and plastic; money, an increasingly abstract proposition, is made and lost not in workshops and fields but on flickering screens; databases grind through a million mainframes, assembling your biography and mine to a fantastic degree of detail; food is synthetic, and only dinosaurs lack microwave ovens in which to nuke it to edibility; half the country can't place the Soviet Union on a map but can direct-dial a telephone number in Moscow in a minute's time. The electronic age is upon us, and we are scarcely able to fathom the enormous changes it portends.

O.B. Hardison, Jr. wants to help. A professor of English literature, like the clairvoyant Hugh Kenner and Marshall McLuhan, and former director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Hardison has now set up shop as a futurist. He is excited by the effects of all this newfangled technology on the arts—and on our culture, our souls.

His new book, *Disappearing Through the Skylight*, abounds in that excitement, and, if Hardison bites off more than he or his readers can comfortably chew, he does not apologize for it. Instead, he takes us on a whirlwind tour of the history of the future—that is, of 20th-century developments leading to today's electronic wonderland—that dizzyingly spins from subject to subject: architectural semantics, artificial intelligence, mathematical biology, the Dada movement in the arts, and the politics of the machine. The result is an often incoherent but thought-provoking excursion into the new and unknown.

Technology, Hardison writes, can be a liberating force, freeing workers from the drudgery of the assembly line and double-entry bookkeeping. (He does not, however, go on to say that technological advantages are generally held by the very few, nor that all the timesaving machines surrounding us have increased the typical American workweek from forty to sixty hours.) It is also a universalizing power, one that subtly erases the differences between, say, a Holiday Inn in Schenectady and one in Singapore. (Daniel Boorstin complained about the process thirty years ago in *The Image*: the same sunlamp in the bathrooms, the same chocolate on the pillows, the same paper umbrellas in the same green drinks.) Independent of cultural values, the new technology permits a McDonald's hamburger restaurant to arise near Gorky Park, a Madonna video to entertain children in Dar es Salaam.

Its universalizing force can diminish differences between human beings as well, perhaps lessening their individuality and certainly compromising their value in the economic machine. Thanks to the new technology, it is now cheaper for Ford Motors to manufacture some car parts in Korea, others in the Philippines, and still others in Brazil, all to be assembled on the Mexican border; it is now more cost-effective for an American airline company to process tickets for a New York-to-Chicago direct flight in computerized offices in Ireland and the Lesser Antilles. Given no shortage worldwide of cheap labor and easy technological access to it, small wonder that American workers are scrambling to keep even something of the standard of living they enjoyed ten years ago.

But for Hardison these are passing matters, since he is more interested in exploring how scientific ideas penetrate popular culture than in considering the displacements they may cause, the shock waves they may send off. A century ago, John Rockefeller, having caught wind of Darwin along with the rest of the industrialized world, was fond of saying, "The growth of a large business is merely the survival of the fittest." Today, words like *megabyte* and *parameter* fill the air, bandied about by citizens in white lab coats and mechanic's overalls—and also, Hardison points out, by artists and writers, for whom it was not so long ago fashionable to shun any contact with the new and metallic.

Here Hardison shines. In the late 19th century, he notes, French writers all but rose up in arms over the Eiffel Tower, an engineering feat that, Alexandre Dumas protested, "even the commercial America would reject." Today their Parisian counterparts exalt the glass pyramid that fronts the Louvre, speak adoringly of the plastic and metal playhouse that is the Centre Pompidou. T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, written during the First World War, is "an expression of bafflement; a kind of silence, you might say," in the face of technological horror; today our required reading is Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and Umberto Eco's *Foucault's Pendulum*, whose secret hero is a personal computer.

The arts are no longer predominantly modernist, opposed to technology, reliant on individual craft, informed by the classical European past. They are modern, often collectively produced, generated by word processors or light pens, ahistoric. Hardison seems to think this condition is well and good, that the "disappearances" of artistic and cultural elites "complete the democratization of art begun by Dada." Anyone, he seems to be saying, can be an artist—provided, he does not add, that the right technological goodies, still expensive enough to keep them a province of political and financial elites, are at hand.

Hardison's vision of an exotically happy future, populated by intelligent robots and electronic artists, full of interactive novels and vaulting skyscrapers, will not be to everyone's taste; and in any event, the jury is still out on whether such trifles as global deforestation will throw a monkey wrench into the works. His book, punctuated by one gee-whiz after another, is nonetheless provocative reading, if only because it demonstrates so clearly how closely linked once separate worlds—the arts, finance, languages, politics, and technology—have now become. The question remains whether what we think of as the best of our present culture will indeed disappear through the skylight, or simply sink into a glittering mire.

Gregory McNamee is senior editor at the University of Arizona Press in Tucson.

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Letter From Canada

by Kenneth McDonald

Ici On Parle Anglais

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When Canada's federal government committed the country to two official languages, it set the scene for the social revolution that has since been foisted upon the Canadian majority.

That was in 1969, when Pierre Trudeau's Official Languages Act declared English and French to be the official languages of Canada, possessing and enjoying "equality of status in all the institutions of the Parliament and Government of Canada." Twenty-five percent of federal government jobs were designated "bilingual" in proportion to Quebec's share of the population, and "bilingualism" became the criterion for employment in ever-widening circles of government and government-related activity throughout the whole country.

However, official bilingualism was not about language; it was about political power.

The legislation discriminates against every Canadian who doesn't happen to live in Quebec or near its borders with Ontario and New Brunswick. Canadians who live in or near Quebec, in French-speaking societies but also within sight and earshot of English television and radio, and with daily opportunities to acquire fluency in English as well as in French, have a tremendous advantage over Canadians everywhere else who have no occasion to use French in their daily lives, rarely meet a French-speaking person and, even if they take French immersion courses, still have no chance to practice French and thus retain their fluency.

Moreover, "bilingualism," it has come to be understood, is the code word for a French-speaking Canadian who also speaks passable English. So it isn't enough for a young Albertan or Newfoundlander to learn French; they have to *be* French, which of course they're not. The bilingual requirement has become a racial requirement. By 1988, the percentage of Francophones in federal government service had risen to 28.5, while in some key departments Francophones occupied from 35 to 70 percent of the posts.

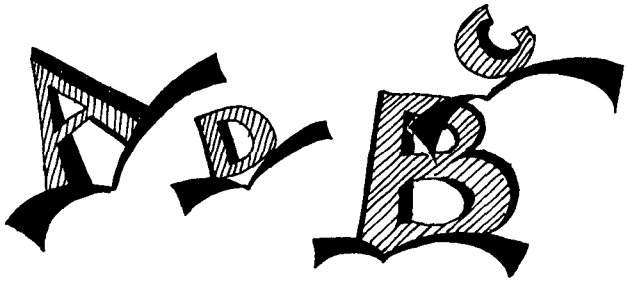
Until 1969, Canada's institutions were essentially English. Parliament was supreme, and everyone was equal under a common law, which itself evolved with changing times. However, when Pierre Trudeau declared that he would not leave Ottawa "until the country and the Government are irreversibly bilingual," he knew that under the English system his Official Languages Act *was* reversible; it could be changed, or repealed, by another Parliament.

Therefore, in 1980, when with the aid of the Quebec vote he was elected for a fourth term after seven months in opposition, he set out to rewrite the English-style Constitution in the French style, with rights "guaranteed" by the state, and parliamentary sovereignty replaced with a written Charter of Rights and Freedoms that included his language provisions and became "the supreme law of the land." He confirmed this in a speech on the new Constitution in December 1981: "And we've got the entrenchment of both official languages, which can never be removed."

At the same time (as noted in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*), "the federal government made significant demands of its own for new, centralized powers over the economy." That was less than a year after launching the National Energy Program, a massive state intervention in Canada's oil and gas industry that devastated Alberta's economy.

For the majority, Canada has always

LIBERAL ARTS



BUT WE'RE STUDYING!

The discovery in March of an electronic bulletin board for sexually explicit stories on the Cyber mainframe computer at the University of Massachusetts (Amherst) has sparked a debate over whether campus administrators can censor computer mail.

John F. Dubach, acting director of the computing center, said that the stories are similar to the forums run in *Playboy* and *Penthouse*. The forums, which are created and managed by students, contain two hundred sexually explicit messages, including thirty to forty stories about sex. The number of students reading the forums increased from about thirty a day to well over a thousand in the week after news of their existence hit the campus newsstands.

Students pay a $10 fee to work on the Cyber system, but they must also sign a document agreeing to use Cyber for only academic purposes. A public meeting to discuss the issue was scheduled for March 28.

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been a nation based on the English tradition of the common law. Under that tradition, everyone is inherently *free* to do anything that is not prohibited by the law. In the French tradition, however, there is no inherent freedom. Rather, the government *confers* certain rights upon the people through a charter. Such conferred rights are, of course, vulnerable to whatever meaning the government or its courts wish to give them. The courts define the rights; by doing so, they limit them. From this, other differences arise.

In the English tradition, everyone is subject to the rule of law, whereas in the French, *le droit administratif* protects civil servants from prosecution for acts done in the performance of their official duties. For example, since the language law was reinforced and extended in 1988 the federal official languages commissioner and staff are virtually above the law. Neither he nor they are compellable witnesses, they cannot be proceeded against in civil or criminal courts for anything done in performance of their duties, and they cannot be sued for libel or slander.

Further, in the English tradition, Parliament—the voice of the people—is supreme. But in the French tradition, a written constitution, and therefore the courts, have supremacy over the legislature.

Canada since its inception has always been home to the two conflicting styles of government. But it wasn't until the advent of Pierre Trudeau that the dominant English style began to give serious ground to the French style, thus quietly, and unnoticed by most, effecting radical change.

In a nutshell, Canada's way of government has been changed into a centralized, essentially collectivist system—a welfare state—that by its nature smothers the whole country, regardless of regional and other differences, under national policies and programs that conflict with the wishes of the majority. Far from nurturing the spirit of nationhood, such a system is a recipe for dissension, and for the development of a litigious, fractious people.

How was such radical change engineered? By exploiting the fact that no political party in Canada can win a federal election without first winning over Quebec. The one-quarter of Canadians who live in Quebec use their political power to control the majority by voting en bloc for the party they think is going to win. In order to win Quebec, a victorious party must make political promises to it. Since making them to Quebec alone would bring charges of favoritism, it must make similar ones to the rest of Canada; to that extent, redistribution of wealth and income has been a political fact of life since confederation.

A native Quebecer and a convinced socialist, Trudeau used the Quebec vote that kept him in office to engineer changes that were consistent with the French style of government. As Colin Campbell noted in his book *Governments Under Stress*, Trudeau put Canada through "perhaps the most furtive expansion of central agencies the world has yet experienced."

As a result, the federal government has become The Great Redistributor, with 60 percent of its noninterest expenditures taken from taxpayers and passed around to governments, businesses, and individuals through three layers of bureaucrats.

The Canadian confederation is in the predicament Felix Morley expressed so clearly in his book *Freedom and Federalism*: "Socialism and federalism are necessarily political opposites, because the former demands that centralized concentration of power which the latter by definition denies."

Nevertheless, help is at hand. The Great Redistributor is in serious trouble. Open-ended "free" medicare, "universal" social programs, and all the appurtenances of the welfare state have raised total government debt, per capita, to nearly double that of the United States. Ottawa has begun to curb its spending by cutting federal subventions to the provinces; provincial governments are cutting theirs to municipalities, and there the buck stops.

By law, municipalities are required to balance their budgets, but on average 50 percent of their spending has been money transferred from the other two levels of government. Now that the transfers are diminishing, local governments must either raise taxes or cut programs. Naturally they're not going to cut the local services they're accountable for, such as building and staffing schools (education accounts for more than half of property taxes), police and fire protection, garbage re-

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moval, maintaining roads and utilities; the programs to cut are those imposed on them by the other two levels, and in English Canada the one that stands out is the artificial provision of French-language services for the relatively few residents whose mother tongue may be French but for whom, like the residents of all other extractions, the working language is English.

Last November in Ontario, where a provincial law requires provincial government agencies in 22 designated centers to provide a range of French-language services, local governments reacted with legislation of their own. By March 1990, 53 local governments (out of some 800) had adopted motions declaring that their official business would be conducted in English only.

Because the language issue is so explosive, the reaction of those Ontario municipalities has attracted nationwide attention. It is also drawing attention to the danger of letting political power get into too few hands. While the political elites in Ottawa are free from the excesses perpetrated by the fallen idols of communism, they are by no means free from the corruption that attends all power. Majority views as expressed in opinion polls are simply ignored. The elites' views prevail as if the polls had never been taken.

Thus the Canadian voter has no influence whatsoever on such issues as official bilingualism, the criminal justice system, immigration and its offshoot, multiculturalism, so-called "pay equity" and "affirmative action" programs, government-funded advocacy groups, or the government spending that takes 52 percent of the average Canadian's income in taxes.

Taxes equal money equals spending power equals control. All the power is at the top. Ottawa controls provincial governments by making them dependent on money it transfers to them. In turn, provincial governments use some of that money, plus some from their own sources, to make local governments dependent on transfers, too.

In short, the spending power in Canada is upside down: most in Ottawa; less in the provincial governments; and least of all in the local governments that are closest to the citizens.

It is ironic that Pierre Trudeau's preoccupation with official bilingualism should be the spark to ignite a revolt against the style of top-down government he imposed on English Canada, but the evidence is there. As Thunder Bay Alderman John Polhill put it: "We're getting sick and tired of getting legislated tax increases we have no say about."

On the divisive issue of official bilingualism, Canadians have gone through the fire to satisfy the predilections of one man: Pierre Trudeau. Many are now hoping that unrest over the language issue will lead to a renewed understanding of federalism's capacity to reconcile order with freedom, and the need to restructure government accordingly.

Kenneth McDonald's third book on Canadian politics, Keeping Canada Together, *is being published this month. He lives in Toronto.*

BRIEF MENTIONS

CLASSICAL SPARTA: TECHNIQUES BEHIND THE SUCCESS
Edited by Anton Powell
Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press; 196 pp., $32.50

HELLENISTIC AND ROMAN SPARTA: A TALE OF TWO CITIES
by Paul Cartledge and Antony Spaworth
London and New York: Routledge; 304 pp., $35.00

The nations of Europe and America have always looked at themselves in the mirror of Greece and Rome. Of the many Greek city-states, two have served to define the usable past of antiquity: Athens, the home of democracy and birthplace of tragedy and comedy; and Sparta, a city who entrusted her defense to men, not walls. Like the United States, the classical Greek world attempted suicide in a war between the two communities that served as cultural poles.

Sparta has been in bad odor for some time. Victor Ehrenburg compared the harsh Spartan regime with the Nazi state, and that comparison has been repeated *ad nauseam* by scholars and vulgarizers who have neither Ehrenburg's erudition nor his excuse (he was a German). Two recent books have attempted to assess the secrets of the Spartan success on the way up and on the way down from the pinnacle of power she reached in the fifth century. *Classical Sparta,* unfortunately, does not entirely live up to the subtitle, although Stephen Hodkinson's essay on marriage and inheritance is an important reworking of a familiar question, and the book contains an interesting discussion of social drinking.

Hellenistic and Roman Sparta, on the other hand, is a fresh look at a topic that has received comparatively little attention. What happens to a highly developed community like Sparta, after it has been conquered and subsumed first by the Macedonians and then the Romans? Cartledge and Spaworth do a good job of wrestling with the evidence, which for much of the period is largely nonliterary. What emerges is a Spartan people with the usual ups and downs of fortune, but whose vision of their classical past gave them an identity that persisted down to the fifth century A.D. In the Roman period, Sparta became a sort of living museum, like Sienna, to which wealthy tourists flocked to observe the quaint customs and the harshness of the famous *agoge* (their system of male education). However artificial Spartan traditionalism may have been, it gave the Spartans a local identity and local patriotism that partly explain its comparative stability and success. As America enters upon its own period of decline, we could do worse than to take a page out of the book of another people dragged unwillingly into empire and ruin.

—*Thomas Fleming*

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John Shelton Reed's "Letter From the Lower Right" will not appear this month.

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·THE ARTS OF LYING·

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COMMONWEAL

Jeanne Berg

No-Fault Citizenship

by Philip Marcus

The United States has bestowed upon 3.1 million persons the new designation of "lawful" in place of "illegal aliens," which is what they were called when they arrived in our midst. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 attempts to right our mutual difficulty by putting these immigrants in line to become permanent resident aliens or even citizens.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has announced the regulations to govern Phase II of this process, already having enrolled them on the books. By October 1994, either these persons will have taken the next step toward permanent residence, or, having failed to comply, will have been subjected to deportation proceedings. The key is preparing them to make that next step forward or backward.

The resident test partly determines the future, and the INS has published a list of 100 questions concerning American history and government, some selected number of which must be passed, in English. This test, and the regulations governing the next phase in the life of our newest prospective Americans, is a peculiar manifestation of our times. Reflecting the compromise out of which came the amnesty for those who had jumped the line to enter the U.S., these INS regulations mirror what citizenship means in the present Republic. Prerequisite to taking the test an illegal must show evidence of continuing capacity to provide for his material needs as well as submit to an AIDS test.

What this exam, and the INS's final regulations, may teach these prospective citizens is for us to ponder. It is at least odd to offer as a reward to these people of self-evident determination qualification for the swaddling clothes of the underclass. Yet that seems to be one of the test's chief lessons.

Of America's history there is an amputated stump, though the myth of the cherry tree is missing. Seven heroes are identified. George Washington gets three references. Abraham Lincoln gets two, and there's one each for Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Francis Scott Key, Martin Luther King, Jr., and a generic American Indian. Yankee history it is, too, with the *Mayflower* and Pilgrims the only prologue to the Revolution. The hardest question may be #82: "Name one purpose of the United Nations." About the states only the first thirteen and the last two admitted matter, for those reasons. Facts about three wars must be known; that our first was against England, that Lincoln presided over the Civil War to "free many slaves," and that in World War II our allies included the Soviets. We have two holidays, the Fourth and Thanksgiving; Inauguration and federal election days are the other notable events on the calendar.

The Constitution receives a decidedly democratic reading. One question requires its identification as the "supreme law of the land," while two other questions detail the process and extent of its amendment. There is nothing about the ideas of the Constitution beyond stating that the "most important" right is to vote (nothing is said about taxes).

In addition, one-fourth of the list is phoney. Much of the required knowledge is redundant; one question answers another, as Questions 9 and 10 illustrate: if the Fourth of July is Independence Day, what is July 4? Assuming the ACLU hasn't banned the flag's display in federal offices, test takers with the wit to look at the flag can see answers to the first eight questions.

Embedded in Question 84—"Whose rights are guaranteed by the Constitution?"—is a startling instance of what used to be known as an "un-American" idea. The correct answer, now, is "everyone," citizen and alien alike. Before this recently invented doctrine, the Constitution distinguished between citizen and person, reserving to citizens certain political rights the possession of which separates us from all other people.

So why become an American citizen? The traditional answer was to exercise certain self-evident truths. The newly authorized answer (Question 86) lists only: to get a government job, travel with the blue passport, or petition to bring relatives here.

What does this test teach? Those who take it are already receiving one reward for breaking the law; compliance will bring them more. We ask them to learn some of the symbols of American life while gaining experience in it. Whatever they may have learned about the American way of life while living here, current law teaches them that they are part of a special group. With the "affirmative action state" being the antithesis of traditional ideas of American citizenship, this test implicitly leads its students further down that road.

Assimilation into our common culture seems like thin gruel to those who learn the lessons of this test. In it and in today's nation we plant seeds for a new crop; will these new immigrants wither, hyphenate, or grow up to be like most other Americans? Whatever happens, we should see now that we fail them twice over as to the meaning of American citizenship.

Philip Marcus is a member of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarships Board.

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Immigration and Naturalization Service
INS Number: 1218-90

United States History/Government Questions and Answers for Adjustment of Status from Temporary Resident to Permanent Resident

Questions

1. What are the colors of our flag?
2. How many stars are there in our flag?
3. What color are the stars on our flag?
4. What do the stars on the flag mean?
5. How many stripes are there in the flag?
6. What color are the stripes?
7. What do the stripes on the flag mean?
8. How many states are there in the Union (United States)?
9. What is the 4th of July?
10. What is the date of Independence Day?
11. Independence from whom?
12. What country did we fight during the Revolutionary War?
13. Who was the first President of the United States?
14. Who is the President of the United States today?
15. Who is the Vice-President of the United States today?
16. Who elects the President of the United States?
17. Who becomes President of the United States if the President should die?
18. For how long do we elect the President?
19. What is the Constitution?
20. Can the Constitution be changed?
21. What do we call a change to the Constitution?
22. How many changes or amendments are there to the Constitution?
23. How many branches are there in our government?
24. What are the three branches of our government?
25. What is the legislative branch of our government?
26. Who makes the laws in the United States?
27. What is Congress?
28. What are the duties of Congress?
29. Who elects Congress?
30. How many senators are there in Congress?
31. Can you name the two senators from your state?
32. For how long do we elect each senator?
33. How many representatives are there in Congress?
34. For how long do we elect the representatives?
35. What is the executive branch of our government?
36. What is the judiciary branch of our government?
37. What are the duties of the Supreme Court?
38. What is the supreme law of the United States?
39. What is the Bill of Rights?
40. What is the capital of your state?
41. Who is the current governor of your state?
42. Who becomes President of the United States if the President and the Vice-President should die?
43. Who is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?
44. Can you name the 13 original states?
45. Who said, "Give me liberty or give me death"?
46. Which countries were our principal allies (friends) during World War II?
47. What is the 49th state of the Union (United States)?
48. How many terms can a President serve?
49. Who was Martin Luther King, Jr.?
50. Who is the head of your local government?
51. According to the Constitution, a person must meet certain requirements in order to be eligible to become President. Name one of these requirements.
52. Why are there 100 senators in the Senate?
53. Who selects the Supreme Court justices?
54. How many Supreme Court justices are there?
55. Why did the Pilgrims come to America?
56. What is the head executive of a state government called?
57. What is the head executive of a city government called?
58. What holiday was celebrated for the first time by the American colonists?
59. Who was the main writer of the Declaration of Independence?
60. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?
61. What is the basic belief of the Declaration of Independence?
62. What is the national anthem of the United States?
63. Who wrote the Star-Spangled Banner?
64. Where does freedom of speech come from?
65. What is the minimum voting age in the United States?
66. Who signs bills into laws?
67. What is the highest court in the United States?
68. Who was President during the Civil War?
69. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?
70. What special group advises the President?
71. Which President is called the "Father of our country?"
72. What is the 50th state of the Union (United States)?
73. Who helped the Pilgrims in America?
74. What is the name of the ship that brought the Pilgrims to America?
75. What were the 13 original states of the U.S. called?
76. Name three rights or freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights.
77. Who has the power to declare war?
78. Name one amendment which guarantees or addresses voting rights?
79. Which President freed the slaves?
80. In what year was the Constitution written?
81. What are the first ten amendments of the Constitution called?

(continued next page)

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82. Name one purpose of the United Nations.
83. Where does Congress meet?
84. Whose rights are guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights?
85. What is the introduction of the Constitution called?
86. Name one benefit of being a citizen of the United States.
87. What is the most important right granted to U.S. citizens?
88. What is the United States Capitol building?
89. What is the White House?
90. Where is the White House located?
91. What is the name of the President's official home?
92. Name one right guaranteed by the First Amendment.
93. Who is the Commander in Chief of the U.S. military?
94. Which President was the first Commander in Chief of the U.S. military?
95. In what month do we vote for the President?
96. In what month is the new President inaugurated?
97. How many times may a senator be re-elected?
98. How many times may a congressman be re-elected?
99. What are the two major political parties in the U.S. today?
100. How many states are there in the United States?

Answers

1. Red, White, and Blue
2. 50
3. White
4. One for each state in the Union (United States)
5. 13
6. Red and White
7. They represent the original 13 states
8. 50
9. Independence Day
10. July 4th
11. England
12. England
13. George Washington
14. George Bush
15. Dan Quayle
16. The electoral college
17. Vice-President
18. Four years
19. The supreme law of the land
20. Yes
21. Amendments
22. 26
23. 3
24. Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary
25. Congress
26. Congress
27. The Senate and The House of Representatives
28. To make laws
29. The people
30. 100
31. (Insert local information)
32. 6 years
33. 435
34. 2 years
35. The President, cabinet, and departments under the cabinet members
36. The Supreme Court
37. To interpret laws
38. The Constitution
39. The first ten amendments of the Constitution
40. (Insert local information)
41. (Insert local information)
42. Speaker of the House of Representatives
43. William Rehnquist
44. Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Rhode Island, and Maryland
45. Patrick Henry
46. United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, France, Russia (U.S.S.R.)
47. Alaska
48. 2
49. A civil rights leader
50. (Insert local information)
51. Must be a natural born citizen of the United States; must be at least 35 years old by the time he/she will serve; must have lived in the United States for at least 14 years
52. Two from each state
53. Appointed by the President
54. 9
55. For religious freedom
56. Governor
57. Mayor
58. Thanksgiving
59. Thomas Jefferson
60. July 4, 1776
61. That all men are created equal
62. The Star-Spangled Banner
63. Francis Scott Key
64. The Bill of Rights
65. 18
66. The President
67. The Supreme Court
68. Abraham Lincoln
69. Freed many slaves
70. The cabinet
71. George Washington
72. Hawaii
73. The American Indians (Native Americans)
74. The *Mayflower*
75. Colonies
76.
1. The right of freedom of speech, press, religion, peaceable assembly and requesting change of government
2. The right to bear arms (the right to have weapons or own a gun, though subject to certain regulations)
3. The government may not quarter, or house, soldiers in people's homes during peacetime without the people's consent
4. The government may not search or take a person's property without a warrant
5. A person may not be tried twice for the same crime and does not have to testify against him/herself
6. A person charged with a crime still has some rights, such as the right to a trial and to have a lawyer
7. The right to trial by jury in most cases
8. Protects people against excessive or unreasonable fines or crucial [sic] and unusual punishment
9. The people have rights other than those mentioned in the Constitution
10. Any power not given to the federal government by the Constitution is a power of either the state or the people

77. The Congress
78. 15th, 19th, 24th, 26th
79. Abraham Lincoln
80. 1787
81. The Bill of Rights
82. For countries to discuss and try to resolve world problems; to provide economic aid to many countries
83. In the Capitol in Washington, D.C.
84. Everyone (citizens and non-citizens living in the U.S.)
85. The Preamble
86. Obtain federal government jobs; travel with a U.S. passport; petition for close relatives to come to the U.S. to live
87. The right to vote
88. The place where Congress meets
89. The President's official home
90. Washington, D.C. (1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW)
91. The White House
92. Freedom of: speech, press, religion, peaceable assembly and, [sic] requesting change of the government
93. The President
94. George Washington
95. November
96. January
97. There is no limit
98. There is no limit
99. Democratic and Republican
100. Fifty (50)

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Jeanne Berg

Religion and Critical Theory

by Stephen L. Tanner

In his 1935 essay "Religion and Literature," T.S. Eliot argued that modern literature had become progressively secularized. In response he proposed that "literary criticism should be complemented by criticism from a definite ethical and theological standpoint." Eliot introduced his arguments with the famous statement, "The 'greatness' of literature cannot be determined solely by literary standards; though we must remember that whether it is literature or not can be determined only by literary standards." The essay, and particularly this statement, has been admired and frequently quoted by those believing that morality and religion are relevant concerns in literary study. But for those persuaded by the chief tenets of recent critical theory, Eliot's arguments are wholly beside the point.

In recent decades, standards and evaluative judgments have all but disappeared from academic literary criticism. A plethora of interpretive voices awaits a new work of fiction—a novel by John Irving, for example—but rare is the voice that asks the once obvious question: is this book worth reading? And even rarer is the question: is this book edifying? The abandonment of value judgments was largely prompted by the formalism of the New Critics. It was implicit in their methods, if not explicit in their assertions. This impetus was accelerated by the influential vogue enjoyed by Northrop Frye during the 60's and early 70's, when, according to the editor of *PMLA*, the journal of the Modern Language Association, nearly every submission contained at least a nod of acknowledgment to Frye. Evaluation had no place in Frye's scheme for a scientific criticism. "The fundamental act of criticism," he said, "is a disinterested response to a work of literature in which all one's beliefs, engagements, commitments, prejudices, stampedings of pity and terror, are ordered to be quiet." Interpretation is the critic's task, he insisted, not evaluation: "When a critic interprets, he is talking about his poet; when he evaluates, he is talking about himself, or, at most, about himself as a representative of his age." Frye disparaged literary evaluation in general. He didn't have to spend much time addressing in particular the question of moral evaluation in criticism; that issue seemed settled. As Lionel Trilling accurately noted in 1970, "At the present time the idea that literature is to be judged by its moral effect has virtually no place in critical theory."

As a teacher of courses in literary criticism, I have occasion to acquire and examine critical anthologies. The boom in critical theory has generated a spate of such anthologies recently. Some are hefty volumes that attempt to include every category of the new approaches. But none of them includes a section with examples of moral or religious approaches. The nearest thing is a heading that uses the term "ethical." The example for this category is an essay in feminist politics. When I queried the editors of one of these anthologies about their failure to include samples of moral or religious criticism, they said the thought never occurred to them.

But the alleged obsolescence of Eliot's views is not simply the result of evaluative criticism and the moral approach becoming unfashionable. The recent challenge to Eliot's statement about determining the greatness of literature goes much deeper. According to Eliot, moral judgment of a literary work should come after we have determined that it is indeed literature. Recent critical theory deems both of these steps unnecessary.

In the first place, such theory denies that literature uses language in any unique or "privileged" way. Consequently, trying to determine what is literature by using literary standards is pointless and misleading. Terry Eagleton, Marxist author of the popular textbook *Literary Theory*, suggests that we eliminate literature departments altogether and simply have departments of discourse, since the difference between forms of discourse—whether comic books, business reports, advertisements, or sonnets—is simply a matter of ideology. In the second place, much recent theory calls into question the common assumption that language is a reliable means of communication and asserts that we must abandon the illusion that the written word can be clearly understood. Since the meaning of all "texts" (a loaded word in current criticism) is indeterminate, Eliot's suggestion that we bring in considerations from an "ethical and theological standpoint" is irrelevant. As Roland Barthes observed, post-structuralist theory "liberates what may be called an anti-theological activity, an activity that is truly revolutionary since to refuse to fix meaning is, in the end, to refuse God and his hypostases—reason, science, law."

Robert Scholes, a prominent scholar of recent criticism, summarizes this aspect of the post-structuralist outlook as follows:

> Once we knew that fiction was about life and criticism was about fiction—and everything was simple. Now we know that fiction is about fiction, is criticism in fact, or metafiction. And we know that criticism is about the impossibility of anything being about life, really, or even about fiction, or, finally, about anything. Criticism has taken the very idea of "aboutness" away from us. It has taught us that language is tautological, if it is not nonsense, and to the extent that it is about anything it is about itself. Mathematics is about mathematics, poetry is about poetry, and criticism is about the impossibility of its own existence.

From this perspective, the moral or religious attitude of a given work of literature can in no case be made clear;

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consequently, there are no grounds for an ethical or theological evaluation.

Eliot, in "Religion and Literature," traces the gradual secularization of literature during the last few centuries, using the novel as his example. He delineates three chief phases. In the first, novelists took the Christian faith for granted and therefore didn't feature it in their fiction. Fielding, Dickens, and Thackeray belong to this phase. In the second, novelists doubted, worried about, or contested the faith. To this phase belong George Eliot, Meredith, and Hardy. The third phase, in which Eliot considered himself to be living, is the phase of "those who have never heard the Christian Faith spoken of as anything but an anachronism." In light of current critical theory, we could add a fourth phase, one that Eliot could not foresee. In this phase, the anti-theological activity Barthes spoke of has undermined confidence in the possibility of communicating unambiguous assertions about even the simplest of practical matters, to say nothing of religious faith and values.

Where does all this leave those who respond sympathetically to Eliot's conception of the inextricable relation between religion and literature? The answer, it seems to me, is that those committed to a moral or religious approach to literary criticism must shift their defenses. Eliot's emplacement, however well fortified, is far from the current battlefront. I use this war imagery advisedly, because the literary scene, particularly within academia, is presently a battleground, with traditional humanism in disarray if not full retreat.

I would like to draw attention to four recent publications that confront the challenges of contemporary theory in a spirit of counterattack but at the same time in a spirit of reasoned negotiation. They provide useful ideas and arguments in defense of the relevance of literature to moral and religious life. While not necessarily addressing the same issues Eliot does, these books assert positions that at least restore the ground for his arguments.

Wayne Booth's purpose in *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction* (University of California Press) is twofold. First, he wishes "to restore the full intellectual legitimacy of our common-sense inclination to talk about stories in ethical terms, treating the characters in them and their makers as more like people than labyrinths, enigmas, or textual puzzles to be deciphered." Second, he wishes to "relocate" ethical criticism, shifting it from flat judgments about presumably stable works to "fluid conversations about the qualities of the company we keep—and the company that we ourselves provide." This central metaphor of books as friends reveals Booth's preference for human practice and experience over abstract theory as a basis for literary discussion. Tactful and inclined to qualification almost to a fault, he attempts to steer a middle way between theorists who view literary works as texts or systems of signs referring to no "reality" other than themselves or other texts, and narrowly ardent defenders of a vital connection between literary experience and the lives of readers. Booth has explored his subject long and tenaciously, and his extensive journey of reading is mapped by the abundant titles in his "Bibliography of Ethical Criticism."

Peter Shaw's *The War Against the Intellect: Episodes in the Decline of Discourse* (University of Iowa Press) is a collection of essays supporting the thesis that starting in the 60's a change emerged in the rules of intellectual discourse whereby the marshaling of logic and evidence lost its prestige, while right feeling and good intentions linked with political activism took its place. This war against the intellect, as he calls it, has produced a decline of discourse—"a slackening in the process of critical evaluation." His essays trace such developments as the acceptance of intellectual intimidation and the turn of subjectivism in discourse from the mid-1970's to the mid-1980's. In addition to delineating this decline in reasoned evaluation, Shaw wishes to challenge scholars and intellectuals to reaffirm the standards of logic, evidence, and rational persuasion in critical discourse. Particularly valuable are the sections exposing the excesses of deconstruction and feminist criticism and the general decline of standards.

Robert Alter's *The Pleasures of Reading: Thinking About Literature in an Ideological Age* (Simon and Schuster) perceptively questions some of the fundamentally misleading dogmas of the new critical theorists and argues for a return to responsive reading of literature itself. Alter persuasively insists that "the language of literature is distinct from the use of language elsewhere in its resources and in its possibilities of expression." This position, of course, restores a basis for the first of Eliot's steps of evaluation: identifying a work of literature according to literary standards. Alter also argues "that literature is not just a self-referential closed circuit but is connected in meaningful and revelatory ways with the world of experience outside the text." This perspective allows for Eliot's second stage of evaluation: the relevance of ethical and theological considerations. Like Booth, Alter is suspicious of the way recent theory pitches its discourse at one or two removes of abstraction from the emotional and imaginative life of the text under discussion. Also like Booth, he affirms a pluralism that acknowledges multiple readings but refuses to enter "the bog of indeterminacy." Like Shaw, he insists that "there must be some grounds for discriminating between plausible interpretations and preposterous ones."

The fourth publication I recommend, the one that treats most specifically the relation between religion and critical theory, is the 1989 volume of *Literature and Belief*. Guest edited by Bruce L. Edwards, vice president of the Conference on Christianity and Literature, this collection of essays confronts the challenges of recent theory by addressing the question, "Can there be a *Christian* theory of literature?" Opinion is diverse, but most of the articles attempt to accommodate some aspect of contemporary theory to a Christian perspective. The editor wisely concludes that "a single, cohesive Christian theory of literature is probably less important (and less attainable) than the continuing effort to respond responsibly and intelligibly to the challenge of contemporary epistemology to the foundations of Christian faith and practice." He is correct; that's where the battle should be engaged in this fourth and most drastic phase of secularization.

He also notes that Christian critics have been slow to generate counter-theories. That's all to the good if theory means—as it too often does nowadays—abstraction, jargon, and

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opaque style. Theory of the same nature as that being combated is not what is needed. That is engaging the enemy on his own terms, and those terms themselves are the principal issue in dispute. Perhaps the best appeal from theoretical arguments — that meaning is indeterminate, that the author is dead, that we are confined to the prison of language and "aboutness" is an illusion, that the reader alone creates meaning, that literature is merely ideological power play — is not an appeal to counter-theories, but an appeal to actual human practice and experience as it has unfolded over centuries. All of Zeno's theory, after all, fails to prevent the arrow from reaching the target.

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STAGE

Jeanne Berg

New American Plays

by Katherine Dalton

Louisville's Humana Festival

Actors Theatre of Louisville's Humana Festival of New American Plays, now in its 14th year, has had its up and downs. But some local grumblings notwithstanding, this year's festival was much better than last, with two excellent plays and only one real miss. Promised works from *Slaves of New York* author Tama Janowitz and novelist E.L. Doctorow did not materialize — probably a blessing. ATL has returned to commissioning plays from playwrights, a move that has greatly improved the festival. Such was ATL's luck that even this season's one playwriting novice, novelist Joyce Carol Oates, whose books leave me cold, came forth with two very creditable one-acts.

The most controversial piece was Romulus Linney's treatment of the trial and death of Hermann Goering. Entitled 2 — because Goering was Hitler's second-in-command — the play is set in the American prison in Nuremberg during Goering's trial for war crimes. Played very well by William Duff-Griffin, Linney's Goering gets the better of his American commandant, proves so winning to his Irish psychiatrist that the Irishman must be replaced, wins over the lieutenant and sergeant set to guard him, and restores the confidence of his ambivalent German lawyer. In court he bests the American prosecutor, Robert Jackson, in an active pursuit of his own defense. Even his Jewish psychiatrist (the American replacement), who naturally hates the man, comes to feel a grudging respect for Goering by the end of the play. The audience is likewise seduced — despite even the atrocities films shown in Act II. The night I saw 2 Duff-Griffin received a standing ovation: as a friend dryly remarked, the playwright had made his point.

With the exception of the psychiatrist, the Americans do not come out well, in what is made to appear as an elaborate show trial; even the execution orders have been typed up two months in advance. Robert Jackson's dream of outlawing war looks even less realistic now than it did at the time. Needless to say all these unpleasant ironies leave the theater-goer squirming in his seat. Given its treatment of the subject, it is a real question whether 2 will get the wide staging it deserves. Despite its merits and Linney's reputation (he is the author of, among other plays, *Holy Ghosts*, about snake-handling fundamentalists), a play that depicts a three-dimensional Goering is as likely to succeed as a portrayal of

Richard Trigg

Anne O'Sullivan (as Evelyn) hoists her fishing trophy in Joan Ackermann-Blount's Zara Spook and Other Lures.

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Abraham Lincoln as a well-intentioned but ambitious politician. Americans prefer their villains black and their heroes spanking white.

A play that should have no trouble at all traveling is Joan Ackermann-Blount's *Zara Spook and Other Lures*, about three women off to a Bass 'n' Gal fishing tournament in New Mexico, and the relations of Evelyn with her importunate boyfriend, and of Ramona with her estranged husband. Evelyn's boyfriend has surreptitiously made her pregnant, and Ramona's husband keeps shooting at her, and neither man will let the poor women fish—I think this is what they call a situation comedy, but it works. Despite some flaws (a melodramatic rattlesnake bite and an extraneous yuppie hitchhiker) the play is funny and very winning. Lines such as "some folks have the cookies, some folks have the jar" as delivered in context by this assortment of oddballs more than make up for the loose ends.

There were some equally funny moments in Jane Martin's new collection of monologues, *Vital Signs*. Jane Martin emerged in 1982 as the reclusive author—emerged is the wrong word—of the successful *Talking With*, another collection of short pieces, and despite nine years of relative fame no lady nor a shred of evidence of any lady has come to light. General opinion seems to be that "Jane Martin" is in fact ATL producing director Jon Jory, but other names crop up: ATL's longtime company member Adale O'Brien; ATL's former director of volunteers, Judy Miller; Lily Tomlin's collaborator, Jane Wagner; even Jon Jory's ex-wife, actress Lee Anne Fahey. Some lean toward the committee theory, involving some of the above and also Susan Rowland, another former ATL staff member. Martin's agent is Alexander Speer, ATL's administrative director, lending further credence to the belief that Jane Martin is pseudonymous rather than merely hiding. After all, even J.D. Salinger occasionally gets photographed.

To return to the work: there was a good bit of humor and some ten-minute tragedies, with the former generally better than the latter. There was a good New Age parody, a wonderful monologue about honeyclimbers (harvesting wild bee honey with the help of smoke and faith), and an equally good satire on modern psychology in a piece about a woman whose personality test has proved she has no personality at all. I enjoy Jane Martin, whoever she is. My only difficulty with her is that she doesn't write plays (with one unsuccessful exception), and however good the hors d'oeuvres I miss the entree.

But at least Jane Martin isn't pretending to create a whole, as Jane Anderson did in her very unsatisfactory play about Matisse. Warned in the program that *The Pink Studio* is "pure invention" and "not meant in any way to be an accurate portrayal of the life of Henri Matisse," the audience gets instead a series of scenes built around some of his paintings, and meant to illustrate how Matisse might have come to paint the green vase before a patterned curtain, or his disappointed wife sitting in a white dress and black stockings on a veranda that looks out over the sea. The actors did not have much to work with—not even history. The whole thing was reminiscent of that third-grade exercise in vocabulary building, in which you take ten new words the teacher gives you and write a story with them. It reeked of a playwriting class assignment, and as such is probably a good idea. But who goes to a concert to hear scales?

I had the same trouble with *The Swan*, Elizabeth Egloff's short play about a woman who takes in a wounded swan, which turns into a man and becomes her lover. Leda, incubi, and the novel *Mrs. Caliban* (in which a woman falls in love with a monster) all came to mind, but the play didn't go anywhere.

The other short plays, Joyce Carol Oates's two one-acts, were much more substantial. *Tone Clusters* concerned a couple being taped for television and asked questions by a disembodied voice about their 22-year-old son's murder of a teenager. Based on a real incident that happened on Long Island, and as slightly futuristically staged (and very well) by Steven Albrezzi, it rises above its clichéd premise, that to lift up the seeming rock of middle-class life is to find only little white grubs.

Miss Oates was lucky in her casting. Adale O'Brien was excellent as the bewildered and grieving mother in *Tone Clusters*, as was Beth Dixon as a middle-aged feminist trying to deal with her increasingly manic elderly mother in *The Eclipse*. Dixon, a top-notch actress, gave the best performance of the festival, and *The Eclipse* was an interesting investigation into the conflicts between a woman's public life and her mother's need for care; like *Tone Clusters* its subject matter comes right out of the newspapers.

Last and least comes Ellen McLaughlin's *Infinity's House*. Ostensibly about "the bomb" and Oppenheimer's angst and with a historical parade of characters ranging from German settlers lost in the Humboldt desert to Chinese railroad workers, it went nowhere, and even with some last-minute cuts went nowhere for two and one-half hours. Since the play wasn't even commissioned by the festival, but by the South Coast Repertory, and has been previously staged elsewhere, ATL doesn't even have the excuse of having to produce what it had commissioned. What is there to say about a drama in which the author acts the part of a deranged mute, in a Freudian slip bit of symbolism?

The (I hope) trend away from commissioning novelists to do plays, a practice that has so often backfired at ATL, was noted above; other trends include more nudity (male and female—in *The Swan*, where it could be justified by the storyline and in *The Pink Studio*, where the appeal was more clearly to prurient interests. There is the further difficulty that ATL used a young female intern for a stark-naked role: the eminence of the festival, and the number of directors and casting agents and talent scouts who come, offer a great temptation to a young actor to take a part she may later regret. Also I'm a prude). One must note as well that the full-length play contest that originated in 1978, and that became a one-act play contest in 1986, is now a ten-minute play contest for 1991. I think ATL will continue to commission new and often good plays, but it will be only from established playwrights (and novelists and journalists), and discovering a Beth Henley or a John Pielmeier *ex nihilo* as happened in the past is not the same as discovering that Joyce Carol Oates can also do drama. And I wish it were different.

Katherine Dalton is the managing editor of Chronicles.

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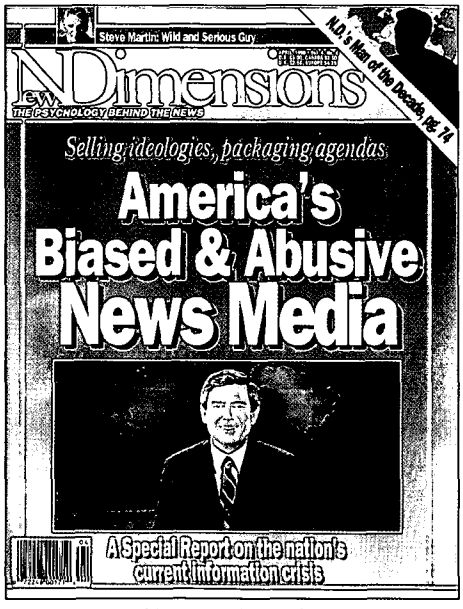
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New Dimensions
THE PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND THE NEWS
Selling ideologies, packaging agendas
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judge, and jury, traditional American values and institutions are being tried, convicted, and "executed" through the media on a scale never before seen.

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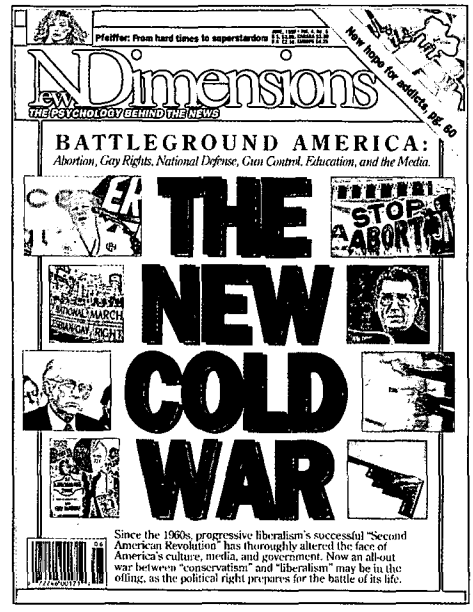
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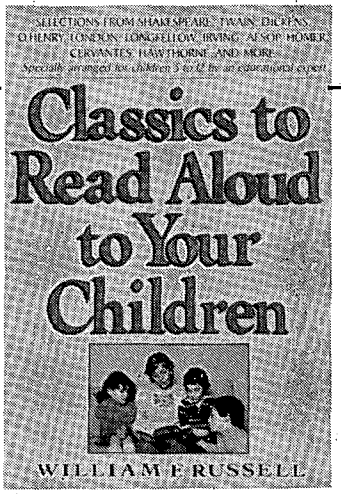
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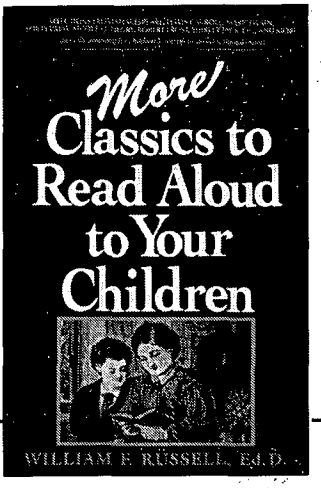

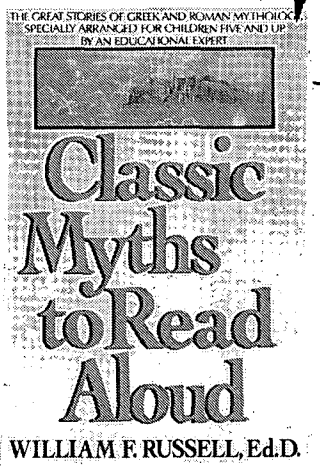
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